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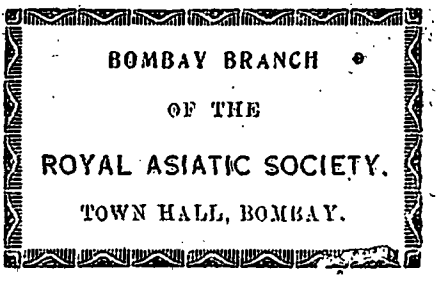

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THE LIFE

DAVID GARRICK;

FROM ORIGINAL FAMILY PAPERS, AND NUMEROUS PUBLISHED AND UNPUBLISHED SOURCES.

BY

PERCY FITZGERALD, M.A., F.S.A.,

AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF SHERIDAN," "THE DEAR GIRL," ETC.

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"An abridgment of all that was pleasant in man."—*Retaliation.*

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TO

THE RIGHT HON. LORD LYTTON.

CONTENTS.

PAGE

INTRODUCTION xi

BOOK THE FIRST.

LICHFIELD.

CHAPTER I.

THE HUGUENOT EXILE—SCHOOL DAYS (1685—1730) . . 1

CHAPTER II.

THE CAPTAIN ON FOREIGN SERVICE — DAVID'S LETTERS (1731—1733) 16

CHAPTER III.

EDIAL—THE CAPTAIN'S RETURN AND DEATH—JOURNEY TO LONDON (1734—1737) 29

BOOK THE SECOND.

GOODMAN'S FIELDS.

CHAPTER I.

STAY AT ROCHESTER—THE WINE MERCHANTS—LIFE ON TOWN —WOFFINGTON (1737—1741) 41

CHAPTER II.

THE STATE OF THE STAGE (1741) 65

CHAPTER III.

PAGE
FIRST APPEARANCE (1741—1742) 82

CHAPTER IV.

FIRST DUBLIN SEASON (1742) 117

CHAPTER V.

REVOLT AGAINST FLEETWOOD — QUARREL WITH MACKLIN (1742—1743) 127

CHAPTER VI.

SHERIDAN—QUARREL WITH WOFFINGTON (1743—1745) . . 147

CHAPTER VII.

SECOND DUBLIN SEASON (1745—1746) 166

CHAPTER VIII.

THE VIOLETTE (1746—1747) 184

CHAPTER IX.

QUIN AND GARRICK—THE NEW MANAGERS OF DRURY LANE (1746—1747) 199

BOOK THE THIRD.

DRURY LANE.

CHAPTER I.

THE OPENING SEASON (1747—1748) 215

CHAPTER II.

MARRIAGE (1748—1749) 228

CHAPTER III.

HOGARTH—FOOTE—THE RIVAL ROMEOS (1749—1750) . . 242

CHAPTER IV.

PANTOMIME—FOREIGN TRAVEL—MOSSOP (1750—1752) . . 262

CHAPTER V.

THE BEDFORD (1752) 283

CHAPTER VI.

PAGE

THE CHINESE FESTIVAL—WOFFINGTON'S RETIREMENT (1755—1757) 309

BOOK THE FOURTH.

THE MANAGER.

CHAPTER I.

TATE WILKINSON — THE COUNTRY TOWN THEATRE—THE MIMICS (1757—1758) 327

CHAPTER II.

ARTHUR MURPHY (1759) 353

CHAPTER III.

THE PLAYWRIGHTS (1759) 366

CHAPTER IV.

HAMPTON AND ITS CIRCLE (1759) 390

CHAPTER V.

FRIENDS AND ACQUAINTANCES (1759) 411

CHAPTER VI.

A MODEL FARCE—SHERIDAN RIVALRY—COLMAN (1759—1761) 438

INTRODUCTION.

It has been often said, that great as was David Garrick's fame as an actor, the story of his career as an English gentleman, in private life, would be found to turn not less remarkable, and perhaps bring him a reputation as high. The glimpses we had of him in other well-known biographies—his exceptional position—the extraordinary respect and esteem he enjoyed with the highest and best in the land, seemed to point at something more than mere recognition of histrionic merit. The result of a careful examination will be found, I trust, to establish this view in the most extraordinary degree, bringing out a wonderful portrait of a singularly noble, generous, and well-trained mind, and a reversal of the popular judgment, which supposed that "little Davy" was knowing, shrewd, avaricious, and self-interested. The kindly reader, who will follow me through this narrative, will, I think, be induced to accept this view to a degree for which he was scarcely prepared, and that, to use the words of the strange Percival Stockdale, the actor was "as great in Garrick, as in *Lear*." It even seems to me that, apart from these two points of view, a third interest will arise, in the simple study of the human character, under conditions rarely to be met

with—and conditions of the most curious sort. A mind that directed a great theatre, at a time when it was an institution of the country—a manager who was in command, not of a regiment of actors merely, but of a whole corps, all great captains and officers —who was wealthy, and thus attracted the needy —who had great influence, and thus drew the ambitious—who had great power, and thus surrounded himself with those who wished to share in it; a mind which came in contact with every sort and shape of humanity, with hosts of playwrights, authors, poets, men of wit, men of learning and of genius; sought by lords and commoners; beset with hacks and Grub Street scribblers; threatened, slandered, courted obsequiously and even slavishly, patronised and despised, laughed at, praised as man was never praised, harassed and comforted alternately—a mind that under such trial, remained calm, equable; gentle, generous, just, neither raised too high nor cast down too low, may surely furnish a rare and useful lesson for study and interest, and help us to what Steele calls a discipline of humanity. This view of Garrick's life will, I am confident, prove not the least interesting.

Within a very short period after the death of DAVID GARRICK, there appeared two accounts of his life and career. These were written by persons who could scarcely claim to be capable, or impartial witnesses, for both had been inferior players at his theatre, and both entertained a special grudge and hostility towards him. Such relations did not promise impartiality. But in the respective treatment of these Memoirs there is a yet more curious feature. From Arthur Murphy, the clever, lively Irishman—the jovial barrister and com-

panion of wits—the man of all professions, so scornfully described by Churchill as—

"Auditor, author, manager, and squire"

—the dramatist, whose comedies are full of a pleasant vivacity, of spirit if not of wit—from this Protean spirit came a dull, turgid, heavy performance, perversely astray in every fact or date, ludicrous in its pomposity, and almost supporting the hint of the bitter satirist, that prudent dulness had "marked him for a mayor."

But it was more curious, still, that from "Tom Davies," the other biographer—a tenth-rate actor, third-rate bookseller, and sober Scotchman—we should have been surprised with an agreeable narrative, written in clear, pleasant English, interspersed with shrewd remarks, and lightened with many an anecdote, picked up from every quarter, but principally in the back parlour of his shop, where every little story, that seemed at all hostile to the actor, was duly retailed. He, too, is strangely inaccurate as to dates, and, like Murphy, strangely incomplete. Neither were on terms with the family, and were not privileged to consult the vast stores of papers and letters which Garrick left behind him; so that the knowledge of both on many matters is pure speculation. Above all, the eyes of both seemed to have settled on that one side of Garrick's life—the theatrical portion, quite ignoring that other remarkable, and no less interesting, view of his own personal character, beside which, as I trust the present account will show, his vast histrionic gifts become almost secondary.

Long after, came Boaden, with a little memoir

prefixed to the two great quartos of Garrick's letters, which were printed, as it were, wholesale. This gentleman was acquainted with Mrs. Garrick, and heard from her a few interesting matters, but does not seem to have made the most of such opportunities. A few more short memoirs exhaust the list of what has been officially written about the life of Garrick.

I have now been induced to attempt what has been thus so often attempted before—led to the task by the real fascination of the subject, and being in possession of special advantages, in materials which may atone for many shortcomings in the execution. The bulk of Garrick's private papers—a vast collection of letters that passed between him and the leading men of his time, are in the possession of my friend, Mr. John Forster. They are of the highest interest, not only for the life of Garrick, but bear on every subject of his time. They fill some thirty volumes, and comprise those curious early letters of the boy David to his father Captain Garrick at Gibraltar, of which Mr. Forster has given some specimens, in his enlarged Life of Goldsmith.* These have been, in the kindest way, placed at my disposal, and the reader will see how much the following Memoir has been enriched by such valuable materials. At the same time the collection and the details are so numerous that I could do little more than select what seemed most striking, leaving behind a vast mass of what seemed equally attractive.

One great difficulty met me at the threshold: that many of the *dramatis personæ* were already so familiar.

* From these Boaden made his rather arbitrary selection, printing almost the least interesting, cutting up the letters, often suppressing the best portions and mistaking the sense.

The many figures which move round Garrick, and the stories associated with them, are well known to every reader, through Boswell, Johnson, and many such writers. Mr. Forster's enlarged edition of his "Goldsmith,"—that model biography,—had told everything—had told a good deal about Garrick himself, and indicated much more, where it passed by. If what familiar was omitted, the story would be incomplete; if given, it might become tedious, and one too often told. Whenever I had occasion, therefore, to go over old ground, and turn these well-known faces to the reader, I have, as far as possible, tried to introduce them under new conditions, and have taken care that the details shall be tolerably new. Thus in sketching the great actors of Garrick's time, whose history Dr. Doran has so recently told, I have carefully presented them from the recollection of those nearest our own time, passing by the familiar stories from the memoirs, and searching little out-of-the-way corners for short touchings and descriptions. On this account I hope the chapter which deals with these great artists will be found one of the most interesting in the book. So with characters like Foote, Boswell, Johnson, and many more—what is given will be found new to nearly all, if not to all. The account of Woffington has never been presented before. Indeed it may be said, that the same principle has been the guide through every chapter. Thus, with an abundance of original MS. material, and a no less abundance of curious printed detail, hitherto buried in scarce books—and books, too, not likely to come in the general reader's way—it may be hoped that a certain air of freshness may have been attained.

As to execution, some indulgence should be extended to the writer of the history of a theatre or of an actor. The actor's calling, like that of the painter, is made up of details, for the most part professional. An actor's life is made up of performance after performance of character; a manager's, as Garrick's was, of the production of play after play. In such a record there is the danger of tediousness and monotony, and of the story falling into the shape of a mere catalogue. On the other hand, if such details are cut down or suppressed, the book loses value as a work of reference. After much deliberation the plan was adopted of throwing the various incidents of Garrick's life, as it were, into groups. In one department was to be brought out specially the management of his theatre, in full detail; in another will be found considered a minute account of his histrionic gifts, in all his characters; in a third, his social life; in a fourth, his friends, his enemies, his actors. These departments have been made to fall in with the advancing course of his life, and are each presented at the period when its subject might be considered best developed. This plan, it is hoped, will remove that chief difficulty, and was adopted with the advice of the kind friend before mentioned, who has assisted me so substantially with materials, and whose eye has watched every sheet as it went to press.

Mr. and Mrs. Hill, of Richmond—Mrs. Hill descending from Garrick's nephew—I have to thank for many curious family papers and traditions, and for much kind assistance: also for permission to have Zoffany's fine picture of Mrs. Garrick, which is in their possession, copied for this work. Mr. Bullock of Sevenoakes,

who has collected a great deal about Garrick and his actors—original letters and tracts, newspapers, &c., I have to thank for placing them at my service, and for much trouble taken in transcribing. To Sir Bernard Burke, Ulster King of Arms, I owe the curious Huguenot journal of Garrick's grandfather, and the genealogical part of this Memoir: while the Reverend John Graham of Lichfield has procured me all kinds of local information and traditions, with a zeal and good nature for which I most heartily thank him. One of the pleasantest features in explorations of this nature, is this genial and earnest co-operation and sympathy on the part of those who may be strangers to the explorer, but have sympathy with his subject. I have also to make my acknowledgments to Mrs. Protheroe, a lady of the Garrick family, for some curious letters.

The illustrations are by Mr. Henry Doyle: from one of the best portraits of Garrick, one of the most characteristic of Woffington; and Zoffany's charming likeness of Mrs. Garrick.

Pedigree, from the Heard Coll., College of Arms—Also from the Beltz and Pulman Coll., ibid.; with additions from family papers.

DE LA GARRIGUE.

David Garric, of Bordeaux, mar. Apr. 1682; ob. Oct. 1694.
Jane, ob. 1694, buried at St Bartholomew's, near Royal Exchange.
Peter Garric, ob. 4th August, 1696.
Magdalene, died unmarried, May, 1701.
. . . . . Peter Fermignac.
. . . . . Niece to David Garric, married Peter Nouat.

Peter Garric, Captain, born 1685; ob. 1736-7.
Arabella Clough, ob. circa 1737.
Jane, born Sept. 1686; married Louis La Condé.
Stephen Garric, born Sept. 1687; ob. April, 1689.
David Garric, born Jan. 26, 1688; ob. cir. 1737.
Stephen Garric, born 26 Aug. 1690; ob. 18 Jan. 1691.
Mary Magdalene, 21st Sept. 1691.
Stephen Garric, born 1692; ob. 4th July, 1693.

Peter, born June 24th, 1710; died unmarried, 1779.
David Garrick, born at Hereford, 29th Feb. 1716; ob. Jun. 20, 1779.
Eva Maria Violette, born at Vienna, 29th Feb. 1724; ob. 16th Oct. 1822.
William, Captain in the army, 1736, died unmarried.
1st Wife, Elizabeth Carrington.
George, born Aug. 22nd, 1723; ob. Feb. 3rd, 1779.
2nd Wife, Elizabeth Tetley.
Magdalene, b. Apr. 29th, 1715.
Jane, b. Apr. 1st, 1718.
Merrial, b. Dec. 19th, 1724.
Thomas Docksey.
Merrial
James Susanna Patton.
Patton, daughter of Winsloe.
Emma Winsloe
Dodson.

Carrington, ob. May 13th, 1757.
Elizabeth Battiscombe.
Arabella, ob. 1819.
Frederick Brydges Schaw.
David, ob. 1795, æt. 41.
Emma Hart m. 1778, born 1759.
Evan Protheroe, alive 1819.
Nathan, ob. Jun. 1788.
Martha, da. of Sir Egerton Leigh, living 1822.
Catherine, mar. 1781.
Payne.
George, b. June, 1775.
Sarah Jane Grey.

Christopher Philip, born 1784.
Louisa Wylde, married 1809.
Emma, died at Hampton.
Emma Hart, married, 1819, to William Garrick Bridges Schaw.
Nathan Egerton Garrick, born 1781.
Emma Vaughan Blunt, married 1808.
George Alexander David.
Sarah Jane Amelia.
Elizabeth Sidney.

1. Carrington, born 4th July, 1811; ob. 11th Oct. 1811.
2. David, born 7th Aug. 1814; ob. 18th Apr. 1816.
Christopher Philip, born 1817; ob. 1843.
David, born 1819; ob. 1821.
Elizabeth Louisa, born 23rd Mar. 1810.
Albinia, 10th Oct. 1812.
Catherine Payne, born 7th Nov. 1820.
Eva, born 1823; ob. 1855.
Nathan David, b. June, 1809.
George, Sept. 1810.
Percival Egerton, July, 1813.
David, Dec. 1814.
Caroline, 1812.

THE

LIFE OF DAVID GARRICK.

BOOK THE FIRST.

LICHFIELD.

CHAPTER I.

THE HUGUENOT EXILE—SCHOOL DAYS.

1685—1730.

EARLY in the year seventeen hundred and sixteen, a lieutenant in command of a party belonging to Colonel James Tyrrel's regiment of Dragoons, came to Hereford on recruiting service. He put up at the Angel Inn, an old timber-framed house, in Widemarsh Street, close to the Leominster road, and from economy, or, more likely, from affection, had taken his wife with him on the expedition. The lieutenant's lady was near her confinement, and on the 19th of February brought into the world their third child, afterwards to be celebrated as the famous actor, DAVID GARRICK, whose history we are about to pursue.*

The recruiting officer was Lieutenant Peter Garrick,

* The Angel Inn was burned down a hundred years ago; though visitors to Hereford are shown a jeweller's shop, and an oak room, as the place where the actor was born.

a French gentleman, as he might be called, having been brought to England from that country when only a mere infant. In his memory might have lingered indistinct pictures of a hurried flight, and fierce soldiers' faces, and a miserable tossing on the sea. For his father and mother had been forced to fly their country, almost the first victims of that revocation which banished the French Huguenots from France. Their grandchild was hereafter to play in many exciting stories, and his own life was not uneventful; yet for colour and dramatic interest he could furnish nothing to put beside the little simple narrative of flight and peril, set down by the pen of the old Huguenot himself.* It breathes gratitude to Heaven for safe and recent deliverance—mingles blessings with every birth and death in his family—each most accurately set down; and has prayers for the conversion of his persecutors, scarcely distinguishable from a muttered imprecation for speedy vengeance.

The Huguenot's family was a noble one—*De la Garrigue*—and connected with the Houses of Perigord and De la Rochefoucauld. They were established near Saintonge, and would seem to have been always Catholic, or to have conformed, and thus obtained licence to remain in their native country. They were flourishing just before the Revolution, signing a contract of marriage in company with some of the most distinguished names in the district of Saintonge.

* This curious little paper, which will be new to the reader, was procured for me from the Heard Collection, London College of Arms, by Sir Bernard Burke, Ulster.

David "Garric" was living at Bordeaux, most likely in the wine trade, when the storm broke, and at the end of August, 1685, passed through Poitou, Brittany, and Saintonge—calling at Saintonge, no doubt, to see his relatives, and with difficulty got to St. Malo, where he embarked, having to leave wife, child, and property behind. He reached Guernsey, where he remained for a month, and finally got to London in safety on the 5th of October. "The 5th December," he writes, "God gave me my wife at London, English style. She embarked from Bordeaux the 19th November, from which she saved herself the 4th, and in a bark of fourteen ton, being hid in a hole, and was a month upon sea, with strong tempests, and at great peril of being lost, and taken by our persecutors, who were very inveterate. Pray God convert them! (The master of the bark is called Peter Cock, of Guernsey.)" Being thus safely arrived in London, they had to wait nearly a year and a half, for the son they had left behind. But happily on the 22nd of May, 1687, "Little Peter arrived in London, by the grace of God, in the ship of John White, with a servant, Mary Mongorier, and paid for their passage twenty-two guineas."

In London he found friends and kinsmen, countrymen and exiles, like himself. These were the families of Sarrazins and Perins, the Fermignacs —one of whom his sister had married—the Mouats, Soulards, and Pigous, names still found over the kingdom. Meanwhile children came—Jane, Stephen, David, and Mary Magdalen; their baptisms, godfathers, and even hour of birth and death being set

out with a minute and devotional exactness. Thus: "The 26th September, 1692, at 10 o'clock at night, God was so good as to deliver my wife from her lying-in of a boy, who was baptized the Wednesday following, being the 30th, at the Walloon Church, by Mr. Basset, minister. Godfather, our cousin Stephen Soulard, who gave him the name of Stephen, whom God bless and preserve for many years for the glory of God, and his own eternal happiness." This prayer was not to be answered. For: "The 4th July, 1693, God took to himself the little Stephen, who died at 10 o'clock in the morning, and the 5th buried at night at 5 o'clock, at Wandsworth, in the new churchyard — *the whole cost* 34*s*." There is a certain simplicity and pathos in this entry. "The little Stephen" was the third of his children so named, but who were all carried off in succession.*

But more trials were to come. "God hath afflicted me," he writes, "and taken from me my poor wife the 2nd December, 1694, Sunday, at 10 o'clock at night, and given her to me in April, 1682. Buried in Bartholomew Lane, behind the Royal Exchange." Two years later, a brother and sister, Peter and Magdalen Garrick, came over to the widower from Rotterdam. The brother died only the month fol-

* The charge of funeral for the second little Stephen is thus set down—

Coffin	10 shillings.
Gloves	3 ,,
Coach	8 ,,
Three bottles	4 ,,
Minister	17 ,,
Sexton	10 ,,
	52 shillings.

lowing after his arrival.* And in May, 1701, his sister Magdalen followed, and left the old exile with his three children—Peter, David, and Jane. He soon provided for them. David was put into the wine trade, and found his way to Portugal, where he prospered. Jane married another exile, bearing the illustrious name of Louis La Condé, and Peter, now about twenty years old, was put into the army.† This was a favourite mode of provision for these exiles, whom the humanity of the nation took care of in a fashion that had none of the humiliation of charity.‡ Presently his regiment was ordered away to Lichfield, where the Huguenot's son was to be quartered a long time, to become known and esteemed in the society of the place. He was considered an amiable gentleman, of quiet and agreeable manners; one that was good company, and could tell a pleasant story. At many a Lichfield fireside must the lieutenant have related the history of his father's trials and sorrows, and of his mother's piteous escape from Bordeaux, in the hold of Peter Cock's fourteen-ton skiff.

In the cathedral choir was a certain Rev. Mr. Clough, who had a daughter called Arabella. This young lady, though not pretty, had the charm of engaging manners and sprightly conversation. It will be seen later what virtues she possessed; how sweet was her disposition, and how almost passionate was the attachment she bore her husband. She fascinated the young

* "Having suffered," writes David, "like a martyr with a retention. God preserve us from the like distemper. Amen."

† The Commission is dated April 12, 1706. These dates are from the War-office, and have been kindly searched for by Colonel Shadwell.

‡ What regiment he was appointed to, does not appear very distinctly, and it might almost seem that he was put on the "establishment." Murphy, with characteristic carelessness, says he received a captain's commission.

ensign, and on November 13th, 1707, little more than a year after he had entered the army, this rather imprudent marriage took place.

A year and a half later came promotion, and the newly-married officer found himself a lieutenant.* Not, however, until June 24th, 1710, was their first child, Peter, born. The vicar choral's wife was an Irish lady, so that in the future actor's veins was to flow a rather mercurial stream, compounded of French, English, and Irish blood,—perhaps not the worst mixture for dramatic talent. The vicar was then living in a house, which, until about twelve years ago, was still standing, and where the officer's son Peter was to grow up, live all his life, and die nearly a century later.† Five years after arrived a daughter, Magdalen, known to her family as Lennie, or Nellie; and a year later, came the recruiting party to Hereford, the Angel Inn, and the birth of DAVID, as we have seen, on February 19th.‡

The year before David's birth the officer had been advanced a step, to the rather curious grade of a "captain-lieutenant," or what would answer to a brevet lieutenancy, did such a rank obtain. From

* Commission dated 23rd November, 1708.

† The house was pulled down in 1855, to make room for the new Probate offices. Many traditions of the Garrick family have been obtained from Lichfield; and there is extant a sort of house-book, kept by a great-grand-niece of the actor, who had long lived with David Garrick's sister. In this has been carefully collected every floating tradition about the family.

‡ He was baptized eight days later in the church of All Saints, as appears from the following note, extracted November 8th, 1866:—"Chris., David, son of Mr. Peter and Arabella Garrick. Baptized February the 28th." All Garrick's biographers have blundered about this date. Davies makes the 20th of February the day both of his birth and baptism, whereas the birth was on the 19th, and the baptism on the 28th. Boaden, pointing out Murphy's mistake, falls into mistake himself, and gives the 20th; and Murphy leads off the marvellous compound of bombast and blundering, he calls his life of Garrick, by a wrong date and place, changing the church into that of All Souls. He adds, too, that after David's birth the lieutenant sold his commission and retired on half-pay—a strange contradiction.

that time children came very fast to the dragoon officer. He had no less than ten in all: of whom three — happily for his slender resources — died in infancy. When his father was on foreign service, little David copied out of the family Bible the exact dates of all their births, &c., and sent it away to him at Gibraltar.*

His alliance with the vicar-choral's daughter had brought him new connections and friends. One of her sisters was a Mrs. Kynaston; another had married one of the Days—a name hereafter to be always associated with Lichfield. Here also was Mr. Hector, the physician who attended Mrs. Garrick and her children, with Dr. James—an obscure country-town doctor—who had not then introduced his famous powders. The days of Miss Seward and Darwin were still a good way off; and the claims to literary society were perhaps of a slender sort. But at the street-corner, opposite St. Mary's Church and its ancient clock, that projected like a sign, was the shop of that remarkable bookseller, Mr. Michael Johnson — an old framed house hanging heavily over the pathway, supported by two clumpy pillars—with the little dark den within, where the books were kept. The bookseller was

* From that letter, which is in the Forster Collection of Garrick Papers, I take the following list:—

Peter	Born June 24, 1710
Magdalen	,, Apr. 29, 1715
David	,, Feb. 19, 1716
Jane	,, Apr. 1, 1718
William	,, Mar. 8, 1720
George	,, Aug. 22, 1723
Merriall	,, Dec. 19, 1724
Daniel, Arabella, Anna-Maria	Died in infancy.

The book from which David copied it is also in existence.

known as a man of mark and character—a good Latin scholar, a magistrate of the city, with an energy and spirit that would take him as far as Birmingham every market-day to push his trade. When the lieutenant's son, David, was a mere infant, the bookseller's famous son was just entering the Lichfield Grammar School, and had already attracted the notice of one of the most influential persons of the place — Mr. Gilbert Walmesley, the bishop's registrar—an elderly and wealthy bachelor, and good scholar. Long after, when Samuel Johnson had become "the great moralist," and "great lexicographer," he gave, in his own sonorous language, a fine sketch of his old patron and friend, who had so patiently listened to his childish sallies: "He was of advanced age, and I was only yet a boy, yet he never received my notions with contempt. He was a Whig, with all the virulence and malevolence of his party: yet difference of opinion did not keep us apart. I honoured him and he endured me." The bookseller's son, considered a remarkable and promising boy, gained his way to other houses, and was encouraged by the Howards, the Levetts, the Swinfens, and by Lieutenant Garrick himself.

There was about seven years between his age and that of David, so that it could hardly have been until Johnson had come back from Stourbridge school, and was "lounging about" Lichfield, uncertain and purposeless, that any serious intimacy could have commenced. One was a youth of seventeen, the other a boy of ten years old. One had passed through the Lichfield Grammar School, and was dreaming of Oxford; the other was just about being put to the grammar school which Samuel had left.

David was already known as a gay and sprightly lad, who could put an odd question in company, and make a smart answer, that nearly amounted to a repartee. Mr. Walmesley, in particular, was often amused by listening to his sallies, and encouraged the mimicries and other antics, which were part of the boy's little accomplishments. It was time now to think of some schooling; and like another lieutenant's son, Laurence Sterne, he was sent to the free school of the town where he was living.

That school—a low, long building with four gables—was then directed by a Mr. Hunter, who had been young Johnson's master also. This man was of the line of old cruel schoolmasters, who were savage and eccentric, and thought the birch-rod the grand agent of education. In after life, Johnson spoke of him almost with horror. "He was a brutal fellow," he said. He would scourge his boys on the old unreasoning principles, beating a lad for not knowing the Latin for candlestick, a word which might not be in the day's lesson. He did not distinguish between mere want of knowledge and neglect of knowledge. When the birching was going on, the unhappy lad had rung in his ear such comfort as "This I do to save you from the gallows." He was very fond of shooting, and any truant pleading in arrest of judgment, that he could point out a covey of partridges, was certain to be reprieved. Under the care of this half-savage, David did not apply himself to his books with much studiousness, but his "sprightliness" and vivacious quickness must have taken him out of the category of mere dull, and idle boys. His remissness was not to be placed to the attraction of games or the seduc-

tiveness of school sports. His idleness, it was remarked, was occasioned by the charms of the lively jest, the pleasant story, and odd dialogue. His shortcomings were not such as would have roused the hostility of Mr. Hunter, and from him, we may suspect, came the most frequent and trustworthy news as to the partridge covers. But the classical knowledge and refined tastes he was to exhibit all through life, show that, even under such discipline, a sound basis had been laid.

One of his schoolfellows here was son to a wealthy gentleman named Simpson, near Lichfield. He afterwards grew up—turned out a scapegrace and *mauvais sujet*—married against his father's consent, lived a dissipated life, and, as of course, fell into difficulties. He was then to think—perhaps for the first time—of his schoolmate, now a wealthy manager and actor, and to him he wrote a piteous letter, asking his influence for reconciliation with the father, and also for a gift of a hundred pounds,—for what the spendthrift calls a loan, is in truth always a gift. His old schoolfellow, who was then styled a shrewd, money-scraping, "stingy," miserly creature, at once sent off the money, wrote down to Lichfield a charming appeal to the offended father, but received back a gruff, surly answer. The actor was not to be rebuffed, wrote again with admirable temper, and actually had the satisfaction of softening the angry father, and reconciling him to the son, and his own old schoolfellow.

He was always ready to divert his companions by a burst of spirits, or by "taking off" some oddity. The talent, of which this was a rude symptom, was to be stimulated by other causes. There was in Lichfield a sort of taste for the drama, and some young ladies had

proposed getting up "The Distressed Mother" at a private house, for which young Johnson had sent them an Epilogue. But there was a more seductive allurement still. The strolling players called at Lichfield on their circuit, playing "Alexander" and the established round of dramas, pouring out the usual stilted declamation and "paviour's sighs," which were then the mode.

The bookseller's son, then undecided as to what course of life he should adopt, was still loitering about Lichfield, and with his young companion, used to attend these performances. He was delighted with all these efforts, without regard to their degree or quality. Once, when a very ordinary player was ranting "Sir Harry Wildair," and tearing the part to tatters, Johnson was charmed, and grew rapturous in his praises. "There is a courtly vivacity about the fellow," he said. But even then, the nicer instinct of the schoolboy could see that there must be a higher standard than this noise and fustian; and he felt that the artist his friend so much admired was "the most vulgar ruffian that ever trod the boards." Long after, when the old moralist, now close upon seventy, found his way back to his native city, these recollections poured back on him, and he made a confession to his faithful henchman and admirer. "Forty years ago, sir, I was in love with an actress here, Mrs. Emmet, who acted *Flora* in 'Hob in the Well.'" "Irene," therefore,—his stilted drama,—was not a schoolman's mere classical exercise, but was prompted by real enthusiasm for the stage. And it may have been on a night when his favourite was playing, that a characteristic scuffle took place. He and David were both present, and Johnson had his

chair on the stage. Going out between the acts, Johnson, on his return, found his seat in possession of a stranger. During his absence a Scotch officer, who owed him some grudge, had encouraged an innkeeper of the place to take it. This fellow declined to give it up, though Johnson explained the matter very civilly. On which he took up chair and innkeeper, and flung both into the pit. This was done with such violence that the Scotch officer called out "that the man's legs were broken." Mr. Walmesley, however, interfered and composed matters.*

It was natural that the presence of these players should kindle in the schoolboy's mind an eagerness to appear on some shape of stage. Full of spirit and gaiety, he was presently to give a hint of what was to be the guiding passion of his life. He set on foot a little scheme for the diversion of his friends, enrolled all his companions in a company, drilled them carefully, and put Farquhar's "Recruiting Officer" in rehearsal. The young manager, only eleven years old, took *Sergeant Kite* for himself, a part of fine fresh humour, and gave the *Chambermaid* to one of his sisters. Johnson, not yet gone to Oxford, was applied to for a Prologue for the little performance, but for some reason is said to have refused—though, as we have seen, he had volunteered one for another occasion. The little piece went off admirably, and the spirit, vivacity, and perfect ease of the young player were long remembered in Lichfield. Captain and Mrs. Garrick, the pleased father and proud mother, sitting

* Garrick told this story to Mrs. Thrale; when she retold it to Johnson, the sage complacently owned that his friend had not spoiled it in the telling, and "that it was very near true to be sure."

among the audience in "the large room," little dreamed that they were unconsciously contributing to their son's fatal adoption of that "degrading" profession. For such was then considered, indeed, the calling of the unhappy vagabonds who played in the Lichfield barns, and who only escaped the stocks by the tolerance of the magistrate. This childish performance, therefore, may be considered David's first appearance on the stage, and has been placed about the year 1727.

To the children these pastimes were welcome enough, but the "captain-lieutenant" must have been carrying on a weary struggle. Only a few months before, on the day after Christmas-day, 1726, he had exchanged from the Dragoons into a marching regiment, a step that seems dictated by a prudent economy. This new corps was the notorious Colonel Kirk's, afterwards to be known as the 2nd Foot. It was time, too, to think seriously of providing for the children, now fast growing up about him. Peter, the eldest, was put into the navy and sent away to sea. And presently arrives from Portugal a most opportune proposal from uncle David, now a flourishing wine merchant at Lisbon, that his nephew and namesake, David, should be sent to him, and established in the house out there. This offer, equivalent to a provision for life, was at once accepted, and David, then but eleven years old, despatched on this distant expedition. Even in this step we see a certain character and sense; as it was not every lad of his years could be sent off in those days of difficult travel on so long a voyage.

He remained a very short time. Such a course of life—the dry routine of a counting-house—could not suit his vivacious temper. One account hints that he

was dismissed as too volatile for business;* but it is more likely that he himself found it distasteful, and had no inclination to waste his lively spirits and sparkling talents in a foreign country. Not that he missed opportunities of enjoyment: for the English merchants delighted in his company, and would put him up on the table after dinner, to declaim whole scenes and speeches from the plays they had heard at home. Noble Portuguese youths patronised him; and he was often heard to tell how he had been in the company of that unfortunate Duke d'Aveiro, who, just as the actor was meditating his first appearance at Goodman's Fields, was put to death for a conspiracy. This glimpse of foreign life—the change from the tranquil stagnation of a country town to the coloured scenes and manners of a new country—the novel shapes of character and humour, must have given an almost dramatic tone to his mind, and furnished him with an early glimpse of the world more valuable, and more official, than any training. English players may congratulate themselves on this failure, otherwise their profession would have suffered fatally, without the *prestige* of one whose social gifts and private virtues, more than his dramatic talents, have given it a dignity it then sadly wanted. That this step was taken calmly, and without displeasure on the side of his uncle, is plain from the fact, that on the latter's return to England the nephew was well received by him, and handsomely provided for in his will.

On his return he was once more sent to Mr. Hunter, whose stern discipline was to repair his deficiences,

* Davies.

which, with interruption and idleness, now began to look serious. His father had gone on half-pay, a step he may have taken to avoid the expense of travelling about with the regiment: but there was presently to come an important change.

CHAPTER II.

THE CAPTAIN ON FOREIGN SERVICE—DAVID'S LETTERS.

1731—1733.

It was now the year 1730, when it was determined to refortify and strongly garrison Gibraltar, after its defence of 1727, in which that other marching lieutenant, Sterne's father, took part; and news came down to Lichfield that Captain Garrick's old regiment, Kirk's, had already embarked. Perhaps his heart went with them. In the year following an opening came, which, however bound he may have been to Lichfield by his affection, must have had the charm of adventure for the old soldier. An officer at Gibraltar wrote over to propose an exchange—that Captain Garrick should come out on full-pay and take his place. This was not to be resisted—perhaps, too, he was not sorry to be free of the Lichfield tradesmen, to whom he was now sadly in debt; or was not disinclined to taste camp life once more, which, to the retired soldier, looks charming in the distance. In July, 1731, he was on full-pay again, and had presently gone up to London with Mrs. Garrick, to embark. After that parting, her tender heart was cruelly wrung, and she fell into miserable fits of despondency and illness. The children were left in Lichfield, and she had to remain long in town with friends, until she grew better. But the captain

left behind him a useful comforter, a boy of surprising sense and spirit—the most zealous and affectionate of children—who seemed now to take the whole responsibility of the family on his childish shoulders, with a tact and ardour surprising in one who was barely sixteen.

With every mail the exiled soldier's eyes were gladdened with long, long letters from the affectionate David, full of gay, amusing Lichfield news; full of genuine love and filial warmth; and showing, too, not the unconscious selfishness of the schoolboy, who cannot help writing of himself and his concerns, but a careful selection of such matters only, as would please and interest the dear father he was addressing. Even the gayer portions seem inspired by the gaiety of a man, and everything is chosen with almost a laborious anxiety and the nicest tact, to cheer and amuse the lonely officer, who, he knew, would have to wait months for the next mail. The father took care to put by this remarkable series, well worthy indeed of being preserved; for they gave certain promise of a ripe wisdom, a true affection that would, later, attach friends, of a wit and gaiety that would secure useful acquaintances, and a tact and gravity that was sure to win success in any profession.* It is hard to give an idea of these engaging letters, which are as wise as they are affectionate, and have a shrewdness far removed from the almost pedantic wisdom of common schoolboys, showing also a quaintness that might be looked for in the letters of grown-up people.

* Mr. Forster, in the second edition of his "Goldsmith," gave a few extracts from these early letters. By his kindness I am now allowed to present some fresh and highly characteristic extracts, hitherto unpublished.

It was curious, certainly, that all these gifts should have centered in David, and that the six others of the captain's family should have dispositions of the most homely and homespun description.

The captain had embarked in due course for Gibraltar; and it would seem that nearly a year passed away before his first letter, announcing his safe arrival, reached Lichfield.* It was answered with affectionate enthusiasm. The boy's letter, written in all the delight at the arrival of this news, is very characteristic, and overflows with affection. It is dated January 21, 1732-3: "It is not to be expressed," he writes, "the joy the family was in at the receipt of dear papa's letter. *Mama was in very good spirits two or three days after she received your letter, but now begins to grow moloncholy, and has little ugly fainting fits.*" "My mama," he goes on, "received the 30*l.* you was so good as to send. She paid 10*l.* to Mr. Rider, one year's rent, and 10*l.* to y^e^ baker, and if you can spare a little more, or tell her you will, she is in hopes of paying all y^e^ debt, *that you may have nothing to fret you when you come home.* My mama staid six weeks in London after you left her at the broker's, for she was very much out of order. Mr. Adair there was prodigiously obliging and civil—*and begged her to send him some ale.* Mr. and Mrs. Hervey came to see my mama as soon as she came to town. She is a very fine lady, and *has returned very few of her visits.*" There is a *naïveté* about all

* From the old system of putting two dates, as for example, 1711-12, it becomes a little difficult to fix the exact order of these letters. The captain's exchange was dated 22nd July, 1731, and David's first letter, January 20th, 1732-3, which was really January, 1733. Therefore the captain had been away nearly a year and a half.

this very charming. But later, in a very short time, his faculties open, and he takes a more manly tone. There were indeed the little local topics—which would be welcome to one whose heart was with his family; and the attentions of the Herveys—"Honorables" and great people when down at Lichfield—were what the boy knew would gratify the absent husband.

While the captain's lady was in town, David was left in charge of the family. They were all depressed and very "moloncolly," writes the boy—scarcely with credit to the Lichfield Grammar School; and the sick lady returning home had to face duns and difficulties, and economise in sore straits. Their clothes were in sad condition: she found their "accoutrements" as he pleasantly called them, "like those of beggars," and there was "a great deal of mending and patching" to be done. So, when Johnson said that his friend had learnt his thrift in small things, from being bred in a half-pay officer's family, where "the study was to make fourpence do as much as others made fourpence-halfpenny do," he was nearly right; only the captain's lady had to strive and make her little fourpence stretch as far as another's eightpence. By-and-by the young fellow writes that "my mamma has cleared all the debts," except that of the most important of all creditors—the butcher. He had, however, accepted something on account, and would wait for the rest. These little shifts and struggles he tells to his father in a pleasant vein of humour, and in a very hopeful tone; so that the captain should know what their struggles were, and at the same time be cheered by hearing of their success. Now he sends his father money—now he forwards, half-comically,

the suit of his sisters, "Lenny and Jenny, who, with the greatest duty and obedience, request a small matter to purchase their head-ornaments;" for how otherwise, says their advocate, are people to distinguish them from the vulgar madams? For himself, he has to inform his "dear pappa," that he is now quite turned a philosopher; but yet, to show that he is not vain of it, protests he would gladly get shot of the philosophical character—especially as he has had lately a pair of silver breeches-buckles presented to him. The only way would be for the captain to send him some handsome materials for a vest and breeches. "They tell me," says his son, slyly, "velvet is very cheap at Gibraltar. Amen, and so be it!" * But it is not likely that the captain—a careless and easy-going officer—attended to this modest commission. Three mails would come in, each with a letter from the faithful son, before an answer would be sent back to Lichfield: and we can hardly accept David's affectionate excuse for this failure of acknowledgment; viz. "that the winds and waves seem more favourable to the captain's letters than to his." The mails brought the absent father some charming tributes of affection from both wife and son—which must have dimmed his eye, as he read, and made the paper tremble in his fingers. That of the lady—ill, shattered in health and spirits, has a sweet earnestness and almost passion, which recalls Steele's tenderness. The paper has a little break in the middle—from the seal being torn away; but only a word or two is lost. "I must tell my dear life and soul," she writes, nearly two years after

* Forster's "Goldsmith."

his departure, "that I am not able to live easy longer without him; *for I grow very* jealous. But in the midst of all this, I do not blame my dear. I have very sad dreams for you. . . . but I have the pleasure when I am up, to think were I with you, how tender . . . . my dear soul would be to me; nay, was, when I was with you last. O! that I had you in my arms. I would tell my dear life how much I am his!—A. G." *

About this is a ring of quaint and ancient pathos—the yearning of a "sweet wife," and all the bloom of new affection, though after some five-and-twenty years of married life. Her son testifies to this longing. He writes of her lingering illness: "My mama is very weak, attended with a lowness of spirits, which compelled her to drink wine, which gives a great deal of uneasiness upon two accounts, as it goes against her inclination and pockett." The son's own fondness breaks out very delightfully; he turns off suddenly into praise of "one piece of Le Grout"—a miniature painter of the day—which he valued above all the pieces of Zeuxis. He would sooner have one glance at it than look a whole day at the finest picture in the world! Nay; it had this effect upon him, that when he looked at it, he fancied himself far away at Gibraltar, and saw the Spaniards, and sometimes mounted guard. The portrait was then in his hand, yet he could not satisfactorily describe it. "It is the figure of a gentleman, and I suppose military by his dress. I think Le Grout told me his name was one Captain Peter Garrick: perhaps, as you are in the army, you may know him. He is pretty, and, I

* Forster MSS.

believe, not very tall." A charming little picture, and described with admirable justice as "a bit of comedy itself—a piece of character and feeling such as Farquhar might have written." But there is yet another touch to complete the domestic scene. "My poor mamma sighs whenever she passes the picture." If doctors could have been of profit, the sick lady ought to have recovered, for there was at Lichfield Doctor James, who writes out, under cover of David's letter, to beg for a small supply of the Peruvian bark, which it is difficult to get pure—which had not yet become the fashionable nostrum, nor helped to hurry from the world Sterne and Goldsmith. There was Mr. Hector, Johnson's schoolfellow, now a young surgeon, attending "Lenny and Jenny," and not yet moved to Birmingham, and Dr. Swinfen, a friend of the Garrick household. But all this medical aid did not much avail. "My mamma *sends her most tender affections* . . . . She says your presence would do her more good than all the physicians in Europe."

Mr. Gilbert Walmesley was living in the Bishop's Palace, where Mr. Seward, the Prebendary, was to live later. Lichfield at this time was very gay. Soldiers were quartered there, and there was lively society enough, to which David contributed his share. Gay as they were, the Lichfield people did not come up to the extraordinary panegyric of Johnson, uttered in all the effusion of one revisiting his native place. "They were the most sober decent people in England," he said; "the most orthodox, the genteelest, in proportion to their wealth, and spoke the purest English." Their orthodoxy may have been

merely the dull, stolid orthodoxy of a provincial town, and the "pure English" that of Johnson himself, who pronounced "fair" like the word *fear*, and "once" like *woonse*. Long after it became one of Garrick's pleasantries to exhibit his friend squeezing a lemon with strange contortions into a bowl, and calling out, "Who's for *poonsh?*" Yet Garrick himself was often remarked for saying "shupreme" and "shuperior."*

At the Bishop's house Mr. Walmesley made his young friend welcome. Now he sends him away "quite grand" to show off at a fine house, with two half-crowns in his pocket to give to the servants; a slight hint of the burden "vails" were in those times, when so much was levied off a mere youth. But it is characteristic of David, who all through his life liked to be with the best, and do whatever the best did. Now the wise and thoughtful boy suggests that a cask of Spanish sherry should be shipped, as a suitable present for his friend, whose kindness and affection might seem to encourage the idea of a substantial provision. Now there is an awkward quarrel between his patron and an Irish Captain Malone, which is unfortunate, as Mr. Walmesley was always so civil to the officers.* Young David himself was constantly with them, and very popular at mess. They were jovial fellows enough, recruiting for Ireland, and anxious that he should join.

"I was near recruiting myself," he writes; for Mr. Hervey who was cornet in Lord Mark Kerr's regiment, had promised, if his brother-in-law, Sir John Aston, should die, to give him the vacant cor-

* This might have arisen out of the scene at the play, when he interposed between Johnson and the officer.

net's commission.* His regiment was quartered in Lichfield; but he had a house in London where Johnson was made welcome, and met genteel company. Where, too, Captain Garrick's son, when he came to town, we may be certain was also introduced.

Happily for the English stage, the officer recovered. Later on, no less than three colonels were each offering him a pair of colours, and his friend Captain Pyott swore roughly that he should at least be chaplain to *his* regiment. With such inducement and such pressure, it seems wonderful that the boy had not been dazzled by the gold and scarlet, and had not marched away out of the place, after the drum. It is not too much to assume that the filial duty, which, it will be seen, so long kept him from adopting another profession, in this instance, too, made him resist the seduction.

Now came a horse-race, to which went David with all the officers. Now came home news of brother Peter, from the admiral, Sir Challoner Ogle, on board whose ship he still was, and who was "vastly fond of him for his good humour and sobriety." Now his friend Captain Pyott gives a grand entertainment at the Swan; and when the marriage of the Prince of Orange was being celebrated all over the kingdom, "with great demonstrations of joy," then the stereotyped loyal newspaper phrase, Mr. Walmesley "gave rack punch" to all the company at the Assembly Rooms. Some of the recruiting officers interfered a little with young David's successes—bright, gay, and gallant as he was—and he writes to his dear "pappa" a comic

* This was the Mr. Henry Hervey of whose kindness Johnson spoke with a forcible warmth—"If you call a dog Hervey, I shall love him."

account of one coxcomb, who had sent verses to a lady, who had of course shown them to *him*. The officer had led off by saying he was not like common soldiers, but "a lover of the Muses." David is very sarcastic on this pretender. "By y^e^ lover of y^e^ Muses, he means himself: which is one of the vainest things I ever read. Indeed, I doubt not but he loves y^e^ Mouses," adds he in his scorn, slipping into a little careless spelling, "but I doubt much whether he is beloved by them." Then he tells of a mysterious "answer" in verse, that was sent to the coxcomb, and which he takes the trouble of copying out to the length of some fifty lines; a most cutting and withering exposure, as he thinks it. The authorship of which his father will guess:—

> "So half-filled butts of new-brewed beer,
> Top-full of something oft appear,
> When vent is given, soon you'll find
> The great production—froth and wind."

Which was rather hard hitting; as was his description of the same hero: "Some squires hunted all the morning, and drank all night; but this officer drank all the morning, and *hunted* all the night."

But with all this gaiety and light trifling they did not lose sight of what was the grand object of the faithful family's existence. Some years now had gone by, and everything was being turned to the one central purpose of getting leave for the captain to come home. They were unwearied in this pious office, and there was no end to the variety of their affectionate little plots. Mr. Hervey, David's own friend, was to appeal to his great relative, Lord Hervey, and was going to write "my mamma a copy of a

letter to Brigadier Columbine, out at Gibraltar;" to the effect that "she had a boy to put out." Another plan was based on a little political corruption—an election drawing on, and he was to be fetched home "to vote for Mr. Plummer." Mr. Walmesley was to go up to town and there get leave: but the same hope of Mr. Walmesley "going up to town to get leave," was repeated in nearly every letter. And so the chequered topics of this wonderful series of letters pour out, and we assist at all the secret and eager hopes, fears, joys, and sorrows, of the trusting Lichfield family, whose eyes are fixed wistfully on Gibraltar.*

At times David had gone up to town—some of his friends were glad to give him that treat—and he visited the playhouses, where Cibber and Quin were then the chief stars. This was a true pleasure for the country lad. He would have found the new Covent Garden Theatre and Drury Lane open, with Rich and Fleetwood reigning, and Goodman's Fields —where he little dreamed he himself would be playing in a very few years. He would have noted an actor set down in the bills as Mechlin, and who was to be his inseparable friend later. Pinkethman and Bullock, who had played in the last century, and must have been full of stage traditions about Shakspeare, still lingered on. Mrs. Clive and Mrs. Cibber were the popular *Polly* and *Lucy*. Quin—sawing and grinding his words, pumping and "paving" as it was called, according to the old iron principles then considered

* Forster MSS. I have merely given a few hints. It is very hard to convey an idea of the style, gaiety, and affectionate earnestness, without setting them out in full, which it is to be hoped will be done one day.

the perfection of acting—little thought there was in the pit a countrified youth who was measuring him with growing repugnance, whose fine eyes opened as he wondered, *were* the audience in earnest in their rounds of applause: or were they merely accepting this poor conventional stuff, because there was nothing better to be offered to them. Or he could have visited the Fairs, where there was good playing, and he could have seen Mrs. Pritchard at "Fielding's Booth." Here, too, he became acquainted with those London delights which had for him such a charm. Though he might go to plays and coffee-houses in London, and hear the chimes at midnight again and again, a curious little piece which I have found among his papers, and which is dated January 31, 1733, shows that his talk and subjects of discussion at such places were of an intellectual sort. He and two friends had had a philosophic discussion, and one of them wrote to him next day, with a sort of half satirical *résumé* of the heads of their argument: "When I came home this morning and found no particular engagement, I sat down reflecting on our symposiac of yesterday; though this name is not so proper for a fast-day. Excuse an addition by—T. M."

The parties were,—

"Dr. Bergmosch, an unbeliever;
"Dr. Llaroon, a believer; and
"Dr. Kircrag (Garrick), a moderate man."

It will be seen that Kircrag is a sort of anagram for Garrick; Bergmosch must have been young Schomberg, afterwards Captain; and Llaroon was a strange and wild soldier, who had fought in the

Flanders wars.* He was a clever artist, an uproarious boon companion, and well known at Moll King's and Mother Douglas's. Llaroon was known to Hogarth and Fielding. This was a curious *coterie*. David always loved gaiety and pleasure, but always tempered his pleasures with refinement, and made them serve the business of life by promoting friendship†.

* Hill MSS.

† There is a curious letter in Hawkins's life, of this date, from Thomas D—t, which may be connected with this little discussion. This writer even begs to be remembered to "Mr. G—."

CHAPTER III.

EDIAL—THE CAPTAIN'S RETURN AND DEATH—JOURNEY TO LONDON.

1734—1737.

Now, when Captain Garrick has been some two or three years away, reappears David's friend and companion, Johnson, who has been at the University, and tried many schemes and places, since he has had the usher's "hod" upon his shoulders, and has now returned to Lichfield, scarcely knowing what to think of next. At this crisis Mr. Walmesley—the influential registrar, the wealthy bachelor and patron—proposes a scheme, which may benefit his two *protégés*. He points out to Johnson, that close to Lichfield, at Edial (or Edjal, as it was popularly pronounced), was lying vacant an old square-built, strangely shaped house, with a high roof, cupola, and gallery on the top, and suggested that Johnson should take and open it as an academy. It was his suggestion too, that Garrick, then about eighteen, should try and complete his education in French and Latin, under so competent and so friendly a master. His advice was taken, and David and his brother George became the first pupils. A few neighbours, no doubt out of deference to the high influence of the bishop's registrar, sent him their sons; among which was Mr. Offley, a young gentleman of condition, and Hawkesworth, afterwards the laborious

voyage compiler. But at no time did the pupils exceed seven or eight.* David must indeed have been well grounded there, for he told a friend he once was able to repeat all the Greek roots by heart; and that on leaving Lichfield, his friend Walmesley gave him a copy of the "Racines Grecques," exacting a promise that he would learn a portion every day by heart.

The principal of the academy had married, and had now some one to direct his household—that almost grotesque figure of a wife, who was much older than the principal himself—the well-known "Tetty," with cheeks flaming with daubs of rouge and the use of cordials; so round and stout, and fantastic, and gaudy in her dress. She was an infinite source of entertainment to the two pupils, and Garrick long after used to divert his friends with a mimicry of the oddities and affectations of this strange lady. The uncouth fondness of her husband was no less diverting. One of Garrick's happiest pictures, with which he used to make his friends roar, was that of their master's going to bed, which the mischievous youth observed through the keyhole. Johnson would be sitting in a chair by the bedside, writing the tragedy on which he was engaged, rolling out passages as his excitement rose, and so absorbed in his work that he would be tucking in the bed-clothes with uncouth twitches, fancying he was already in bed.†

The master was indeed actively engaged on his stilted, untheatrical play of "Irene," and perhaps little thought that the pupil, whom he fancied was fast asleep below, would one day gratefully bring it out for him at the

* Sir John Hawkins.

† The story is given both by Boswell and Cradock.

greatest of the London theatres, or lend it the assistance of his own admirable acting. He was hard at work, putting the most stately and abstract sentiments into the mouths of the meanest Turks; and before he went away up to town had some three acts of his tragedy ready. Every one in Lichfield knew the grand scheme Mr. Johnson was busy with. Peter Garrick, the midshipman, then at home, was applied to for his copy of "The Turkish History," to supply colour and "properties." The work was brought to the bishop's palace and read to Mr. Walmesley, who made a natural objection, that when the heroine, even at that imperfect stage, was in such extremity of distress, how was he to contrive to plunge her into deeper calamity? The author had a pleasant answer ready: "Sir," he said, slyly, "I can put her into the spiritual court;" which was Mr. Walmesley's own court. His liveliest scholar was, even then, busy working for the stage, and instead of the exercise which the master expected, would produce some scenes of a comedy. This, he said, had been his third attempt at writing; and with a tragedy and a comedy thus in their hands at the same time, it is not likely that much attention could be given to the more solemn duties of education. Still the master did not allow the old familiarity to interfere with what he felt to be his duty, and would enforce his teachings vigorously. To him and to the pedagogue of the grammar school, was David indebted for the excellent classic taste and tone of mind, which always distinguished him. Long after, when he had been facing audiences for thirty years, he told Dr. Monsey he never could shake off a certain awe in Johnson's presence, which he traced back

to a feeling that the Doctor had been his schoolmaster in these old Edial days.

Still the academy did not prosper. Perhaps it was too ambitious in name or pretension. David had now left; indeed, brought home by the joyful return of the wished-for father. The never-wearying intercession, the affectionate scheming of his wife and children, had at last prevailed, and now, by the beginning of the year 1736 he was back once more at Lichfield. Some forty years later the son recalled the raptures of that return, and reproached himself for a light speech, for which his joy and good spirits only were accountable. "I daresay, sir," he said, slyly, "I have now a good many brothers and sisters at Gibraltar;" a piece of raillery in the prevailing key of the day, which brought fresh tears to Mrs. Garrick's gentle eyes.* But there were other reasons, beside those of affection, which brought the captain home. His health, shattered by travel and climate, was beginning to fail him, and it became therefore his first concern to establish David (now close upon twenty) and start him suitably in life. The captain's means were still scanty enough, and he was busy negotiating some means of disposing of his commission, for the benefit of his wife and children. Their neighbour, Mr. Walmesley, was once more called into counsel, to advise on Davy's prospects and choice of a profession. And this seemed all that the Garrick family might now reasonably look for from

* This little story is given in Stockdale's absurd "Memoirs," and illustrates the confusion and bombast into which writers of "personal memoirs" sometimes fall. He says the captain had been eight or nine years at Gibraltar, and talks of "little David, then about twelve years old, showing arch and poignant humour, which was characteristic of the future unrivalled comedian." "Little David" was then nineteen.

their old friend and patron, as he had only a few months before* married the sister of that "Molly Aston," on whose charms Johnson used to dwell with almost senile raptures. This was a really heavy blow: for the family had not unnaturally looked to his making a provision for the youth he esteemed so highly.†

Various plans were proposed. A university education was put aside as too costly. The Bar was at last finally decided upon; though there was a difficulty in the way as to how the necessary preparation was to be secured, without attendance at a university. Here Mr. Walmesley good-naturedly came to their aid. There happened to be living in Rochester a very old friend and fellow-townsman of his, the Rev. Mr. Colson, a mathematician of reputation, whose contributions to the scientific journals of the day were well known. To him Mr. Walmesley wrote the "strongest" and warmest letter conceivable,‡ asking him as a favour to take David, and teach him "mathematics, philosophy, and humane learning," and giving his *protégé* the very highest character. "My neighbour, Captain Garrick, (who is a *honest, valuable man,*) has a son, a very sensible young fellow," says Mr. Walmesley, giving a little sketch of his friend, "*a good scholar*, . . . of sober and good disposition, and is as ingenious and promising a young man as ever I knew in my life." This is high praise, and at the same time a very complete little portrait. He adds that he will trespass very little

* In 1786.

† He was fifty-six when he married; and the year following writes a little ruefully "that his chances of seeing London are now more hazardous than ever."

‡ Dated Feb. 1736.

on Mr. Colson's instructions, and will be found a pleasant companion at recreation. "This young gentleman, you must know," goes on Mr. Walmesley, "has been very much with me, ever since he was a child, —*almost every day.* I have taken a pleasure often in instructing him, and have a great affection and esteem for him." The captain, he said, could not hope to send him to the Temple, for some two or three years as yet. Mr. Walmesley is quite anxious and pressing about the matter. Any reasonable sum would be paid, "and I shall think myself very much obliged to you into the bargain." Mr. Colson must contrive to spend a month or six weeks with him at Lichfield, when there would always be found a stall for the horse, and a bed for the master.

But this arrangement, for some reason, was not at once completed. It would be hard for the needy captain to get together funds enough for so serious an expedition. Meanwhile David might have continued attending his friend's instruction, who had now actually appealed to the whole kingdom for pupils, in the well-known advertisement which appeared in "The Gentleman's Magazine"—"At Edial, near Lichfield, in Staffordshire, young gentlemen are boarded, and taught the Latin and Greek languages, by SAMUEL JOHNSON."

It was later determined that David should be sent to the Rochester clergyman, who had accepted the charge. His friend Johnson, whose Edial House business had quite languished out, saw here an opportunity for going to try his fortune, and on the morning of March the 2nd, 1737, the two friends set out together for London. Mr. Walmesley commended Johnson also to Mr. Colson's kind offices as "a poet,"

and likely to turn out "a fine tragedy writer." This was only the old pattern of adventure—every one with "parts," as it was called—every provincial light—posting up to the great market with a heavy poem or play in his pocket. The rural family would scrape together the money for the journey, and their Hope would set off for Town, like Whittington, carrying the precious wares in his pocket that was to make all their fortunes.

Long after, they looked back to this pleasant adventure, and often talked over its incidents. Johnson, whose little weakness was a perpetual discontent that "a mere player" should have been more successful in the world than a grand moralist, was not sorry to hint at their little shifts on this occasion; perhaps, too, with the complacency of the arrogant Bounderby, at the notion of being born in a ditch. In a large company, the quick ear of Garrick would hear the Doctor fixing a date by a something beginning: "That was the year when I came to London with twopence-halfpenny in my pocket—" Not without surprise at such a statement, Garrick would repeat, "With twopence-halfpenny in your pocket?" There was an opportunity here for a wholesome correction. "Why, yes," roars the Doctor, "with twopence-halfpenny; and thou, Davy, with three-halfpence in thine!" Garrick's good humour could make him accept so disagreeable a fiction without remonstrance; though in truth it was more probable that the scantier provision should have been on the side of Johnson, whose shifts and privations in London were presently to begin. Neither David's parents nor his kind patron, Walmesley, would have sent him away in such beggarly condition.

They made their journey, however, economically. "We rode and tied," said Mr. Garrick, later, alluding to a thrifty mode, by which two people could contrive to have the benefit of one horse between them, for their travelling. But, as Boswell says, this was a mere complacent embellishment; otherwise it would be amusing to call up the picture of the bright young fellow cantering on his stage, halting and tying up his beast to the nearest tree, and then posting on foot; while behind came struggling the uncouth figure, with the seamed neck, the heavy shoulders working, the careless dress, until the welcome beast was in sight. Thus they got on to London: the one to enter on his weary course as a bookseller's hack. They stayed together in town a short time, presently found their slender stock of money all but exhausted, and for the moment were sorely pressed. In this extremity young Garrick recollected a bookseller named Wilcox, of whom he knew a very little, and both going to him, and telling their story, simply and naturally, he was induced to advance them five pounds on their joint note, which in a very short time they punctually took up and satisfied. When Johnson told the bookseller his intention was to get his bread by writing, the other eyed his burly figure and said "he had better get a porter's knot."*

David, however, contrived to save the three or four pounds necessary for his fees, and lost no time in entering as a student of "the Honourable Society of

* "Wilcox," said Johnson, "was one of my best friends." This friendship was therefore another of his obligations to Garrick. The story of the loan is told by Sir John Hawkins, who says he had it from "an eye-witness."

Lincoln's Inn." On the 9th of March, his name was enrolled, his fees paid, and he had become formally a law student.* Thus it was not to be the Temple, as his father had designed, perhaps a little vaguely. The "vivacity" and "gaiety" which made the young man such a welcome companion, hint to us a little unsteadiness and taste for pleasure, which, in one of his "sprightly parts," exposed to the seductions of the capital, was almost pardonable. Bright, good-looking, full of intelligence and wit, of "a neat figure" we are told, though short, he found himself thrown away on the dull society of the country town, where they must have owned, in their uncouth dialect, that he was far "shuperior" to them. The early difficulties—the bookseller's loan—show that he had been sent up to town, not so much to benefit by Mr. Colson's training, as to look about, and see what might turn up, or what his relations would be inclined to do for him.† But in this short round of trifling, he was to be startled by a fatal piece of news—which interrupted all these plans.

In the January of that year the captain had found his way to London, where he was seized with his last illness, and had taken the opportunity of executing his will. He had full sense of his failing health, and the immediate business of his visit was, no doubt, to try and

* The following is a copy of the entry:—"David Garrick, gentleman, second son of Captain Peter Garrick, is admitted into the society of this Inn, the 9th day of March, in the 10th year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord, George II., by the grace of God, king of Great Britain and Ireland, A.D. 1736, and hath paid to the use of this society the sum of three pounds, three shillings, and fourpence."

† Davies seems to have heard something to this effect; for he says that "when Garrick arrived in town, he found that his finances would not enable him to put himself under the care of Mr. Colson."

negotiate the sale of his captaincy, from which he hoped to make provision for his children. He seems to have nearly succeeded in concluding, for a sum of eleven hundred pounds, but was not able to complete the contract.* And it almost seems as though he was reckoning on this sum when, on the first day of the new year, 1737, he sat down to dispose of his property. To his three elder children he gave five hundred pounds each: to one son four hundred; and to the two youngest children, three hundred each. Last of all came this bequest—"*To my son David, One Shilling.*"† This might well startle us who have been following the charming and filial letters the boy was writing to his absent father. Of itself, indeed, it would hardly be proof of want of duty, in one of the character of David Garrick, who was presently to give proof of a real filial devotion and personal sacrifice. But it can be accounted for most satisfactorily. The Portuguese-wine-uncle had now come over, full of years and wealth, had seen his nephew, and had taken, in the best part, an off-hand appeal that he was surely under some obligation to do something for David, after the fruitless Lisbon expedition, undertaken at his wish. He therefore revised his will, and leaving his Lichfield nephews and nieces five hundred pounds each, increased David's portion to one thousand pounds.‡ Thus, when the captain came to prepare his own will, he must have thought that there

* From a letter written to the editor of "The Gentleman's Magazine" by one of the Garrick family, and signed E. G.—See "Gentleman's Magazine," 1779.

† From the original at Doctors' Commons. He left Mr. La Condé and Mrs. Garrick executor and executrix.

‡ Davies. It may reasonably be suspected that the captain met his brother in town, and himself suggested this compensation.

was no need to take care of David, already handsomely provided for, who was, besides, furnished more than the rest with vivacity and gifts sure to help him forward in the world.

The captain's campaigns were now at last to end. He had returned home to Lichfield—was taken ill, and died, and was there buried. This event took place scarcely a month after his son David's departure—about the end of March.* "An honest, valuable man," must have been the hearty and grieving verdict of his friends. His almost confident hope, expressed to his friend Walmesley, of being able "in two or three years" to equip David for the Temple, was not to be fulfilled. To the affectionate, loving wife, who had felt in their temporary separation all the bitterness of death, it may be conceived what a blow it was. Seven children were left to her care;† and though she might rest with confidence in the good sense and affection of her second son—the eldest was away at sea—still as yet that "vivacity" and gaiety had produced a certain unsteadiness, which it would take some time to temper.

About this time, also, we may place the date of his uncle, the wine merchant's, death, by which he "came in" for his welcome legacy. His biographers say that now he was enabled to purchase for himself, the benefit of the Rochester clergyman's instruction, and

* I find that his will was duly proved on the 7th of April following. "Appeared personally, Wm. Morgan, of the Par. of St. Paul, Covent Garden, Co. Middx., apothecary, and Thomas Goddard, of the parish of St. James, Westminster, said Co., Esquire, to swear to the above, being the last will, &c., of Peter Garrick, late of Litchfield, Stafford, and Captain in a regiment of foot, under the command of the Honourable Major-General Kirk, deceased. Proved 7 April, 1737, by Arabella Garrick, widow, relict of deceased."—*From Doctors' Commons.*

† Murphy says five.

fit himself for some profession. What that profession was to be, had he been left to his own choice and inclination, there would have been no hesitation. Already he was being drawn to THE STAGE—the two charming, irresistible Muses were inviting him towards them, half coaxingly, half imperiously, just as he was to be painted later in the most characteristic of pictures. But there was a reason, which, to his infinite credit, withheld him—to the widowed lady down at Lichfield, it would have been a fresh and most painful trial: and he could not bring himself to wring—or grieve even—that affectionate heart. He sacrificed what he felt was his true strength and success to this pious motive, and set himself seriously to embrace what was distasteful, and likely to be a failure. Long after, he told his friends that he had found his account, and worldly reward, in this act of filial duty; for had he gone on the stage then, with his powers immature, and nothing to support him but mere ardour and good will, he would certainly have failed; and the reader will see that almost every step of "our hero's" life is thus marked by some sweet and gracious act, which was sure to draw to him the kindliest sympathies of all—as I hope it will those of the reader.

BOOK THE SECOND.

GOODMAN'S FIELDS AND DUBLIN.

CHAPTER I.

STAY AT ROCHESTER—THE WINE MERCHANTS—LIFE ON TOWN—WOFFINGTON.

1737—1741.

To this day Rochester is a quaint old town, refreshing to look upon, appearing a long serpent-like street, with timber-framed houses, and patches of good old, cheerful, rubicund brick, a great carved and gilt clock projecting over the path, with the almshouse still standing where the Seven Poor Travellers are taken in every night. It can hardly be much changed since the year when young David Garrick came to live there with Mr. Colson. That clergyman seems to have been a dreamy scholar, very absent, and had become almost indifferent to his family concerns, from delight in his scientific studies. Such a one was not likely to do much for the needy student who was recommended to him,—a neglect which the latter seems to have resented not a little, long after, recalling him, and making his character point a moral for the readers of "The Rambler."* There Gelidus† is

* In No. 24.

† I have assumed Gelidus to be the portrait of Garrick's third master, Mr.

found neglecting "the endearments of his wife to count the drops of rain, note the changes of the wind, and calculate the eclipses of the moons of Jupiter." This philosopher lived entirely in an upper room of his house, where none of his family dared to intrude. When he came down, he seemed to be walking about like a total stranger. Not, too, without humour, and most probably founded in truth, is his description of two instances of Gelidus' utter indifference to the mere social events of the world that was unconnected with science. He receives a letter, "*and having given it to his servant to read,* it was found to bring news of his brother's shipwreck, who was left naked and destitute in a foreign country. 'Naked and destitute!' said Gelidus, abstractedly; 'reach me down the last volume of meteorological observations!'" When they came to tell him of a fire that was advancing so rapidly on all sides, that the inhabitants were only thinking of their lives, he said with interest, "What you tell me is very probable, for fire *naturally moves in a circle.*" Such a character would have been a subject for the gay mimicry of his pupil, and who may have described it to his friend.

We have no accounts of his progress under what Murphy oddly calls "Mr. Colson's patronage," though Davies a little mysteriously announces that "in the

Colson, on the authority of Mrs. Thrale, which there is no reason to reject. Mr. Croker, in his "Boswell," dismisses the notion with "This is a mistake. It does not appear that Johnson ever saw Colson." This is not at all conclusive. For it is more than likely that he would have waited on the person to whom he was so strongly recommended. He then proves that Johnson did not become acquainted with *another* Colson until after the "Rambler" was written. Mrs. Thrale gives a whole catalogue of these "Rambler" characters, with the names of their originals told to her—as it would seem, this one of *Gelidus* was—by Johnson himself.

company of so rational a philosopher, he was imperceptibly and gradually improved in the talent of thinking and reasoning"—a description which seems vague enough to be mere speculation. Indeed, a mathematician and recluse, so unsophisticated in worldly matters, could scarcely have been of much profit to the young man. Such a preceptor was not likely to be a serious restraint, and accordingly the young man was presently organizing his private theatricals in the quaint little town; and the local chronicle records with pride that there were many alive who recollected these "early dawnings" of his lyrical genius. The truth was, that even now he was looking fondly to the stage; and had he consulted his own inclination, must have embraced it at once. In that family, his "vivacity" was often fondly recalled.*

With this professor he would seem to have remained some months, possibly a year. Then it became time to settle on something decisive. "*Sublime geometry* had no attractions for him; the briars and brambles of law deterred him from *thinking any more of Lincoln's Inn.*" In such fine writing and bathos does his biographer, Murphy, describe the abandonment of the law. He took leave of his tutor, who in a couple of years later was appointed the Lucas Professor at Cambridge, and early in 1738 returned to Lichfield.

The question again to be seriously resolved was—what course of life should he take up? Peter Garrick, having abandoned the navy, had now *his* profession to choose also. It was prudently determined that

* By Mrs. Newling, who may have been Colson's daughter.

David should put to profit the scanty knowledge he had acquired, not at Rochester, not at Edial, but such gleanings of wine knowledge as he had picked up during the flying visit to Lisbon. Both set their little capital together, and started in partnership as wine merchants. One of the partners was to live in Lichfield, the other up in London, and extend connection, and thus it was hoped a wide and profitable business could be carried on. It is not difficult to speculate who represented the firm in town.

The Lichfield partner was in face very like his brother David; but the large face and heavy features, common to both, were not lit up by such wonderful lamps, or kindled by so eternal a vivacity. Johnson always affected to believe that if Peter had had opportunities, or had applied himself to society, he might have made a social reputation. He had "sedate and placid manners," it seemed to Boswell; and though he talked about fishing with enthusiasm, did not appear to have ever read Isaac Walton.* He succeeded in quite impressing his guest with his talk, appearing to that diligent reporter quite a "London narrator."† It was indeed scarcely possible for a man to be thrown much with so gay a brother, and the famous people which that brother had at his house, without catching some faint sparks of liveliness or artificial gaiety. To the end, however, he seems to have had that sort of spurious "good common-sense," which does not go beyond outward solemnity and

* Piozzi MS., quoted by Croker.

† Boswell, in 1776. He gives us, at the same time, his own idea of a town wit, which was "telling a variety of anecdotes with that *earnestness* and attempt at mimicry which we usually find in all the wits of the metropolis."

gravity, and that foolish prudence which is merely what has been happily called a "rash caution." To the end, too, he held to his wine business, and after his more famous brother had "come out" at Drury Lane, entered into partnership—became "Garrick and Bailey, Wine Merchants,"—made a little money, was left a great deal more by his brother, and died imbecile. No doubt it was some such impression of his solemn sense and his "long head," as it is called, that made Johnson, who had now laboured out the last act of the tragedy, take him to the Fountain Tavern, and read over to him the whole piece, now quite finished and about to be sent to Fleetwood, of Drury Lane; by whom this dull but conscientious work, the fruit of much hodman's labour, was to be rejected.

The young wine merchants set up business in Durham Yard, where they had their vaults and offices, at the bottom of one of the little streets leading out of the Strand. Later, the brothers Adam swept Durham Yard away, and raised what was then considered a stupendous architectural monument, the Adelphi arches, with the streets and buildings reared upon them. It was not a little curious, that many years later the wealthy actor should have been living in one of these pretentious mansions, over the spot where his vaults had once been.*

It was said that they contrived to form a sort of theatrical connection, most of the coffee-houses about the theatres giving them their custom. Mr. Cooke once saw a business receipt of the firm's, to a Mr. Robinson of the Strand close by, who had given an order for two

* Johnson, a couple of years later, was living at "The Black Boy," Strand, just opposite Durham Yard.

dozen of red port, at eighteen shillings a dozen. It was signed :

"For Self & Co.,
October, 1739.
"D. GARRICK."

If ever there was a reminder of these wine-selling days wanted, there was one quarter whence it was certain to come. When the actor was rich and flourishing, Foote was fond of whispering "that he remembered Garrick, in Durham Yard, with three quarts of vinegar in the cellar, calling himself a wine merchant." When a man has raised himself by honourable exertion, there is sure to be some one to recall the Durham Yard, and the three quarts of vinegar.

Still a partnership was not likely to prosper where one of the partners was a gay, elegant, spirited youth, who did not scruple to stand up on the tables of the clubs and coffee-houses where his wine was drunk, and give a series of diverting mimicries. He produced intense delight and applause, and it was almost a matter of course that judges and critics should tell the clever young fellow that he was made for a higher and more splendid career, than retailing wine. Their tempers, too, did not assimilate, the senior partner being slow, serious, and pedantic, and fond of his business; while the junior partner was invited out to parties, *recherché* for his gifts and pleasant manners, and found at every coffee-house and theatre. The stage, it was said, wholly possessed him. Under such conditions business did not thrive.

One who knew him about this time, describes him happily "a very sprightly young man, neatly made, of an expressive countenance, and most agreeable and

entertaining manners." The portraits of him at this pleasant era have all that air of "neat make," with a youthful brightness in the face. At the convivial meetings he was "the idol," and easily took the lead. He would relate stories of his Portuguese *fiasco;* excelled in humorous pictures of travelling life, and of characters met on the road. One of his enemies, who had often listened to him, and who was himself a humorist, declared that he had scarcely ever heard anything to compare with the rich fun and gaiety of these sketches. It was noticed that the stage was his darling subject, and that his most favourite mimicries were those of actors. Such a course of life for one so young—he was then but twenty-three—would have infallibly shipwrecked any of the youths of the day. But these were sallies of pure enjoyment and honest good spirits; and in every stage of David Garrick's life, we find the correcting restraint of calm good sense, which others with less command of themselves, chose to translate into selfishness—"nearness"—"knowingness"—and such unpleasant qualities.

It was noticed that he had a companion from whom he was almost inseparable. This was an actor belonging to Drury Lane—a strange character—an Irishman of rough humour and ability, a good fives player, and a very promising actor. His appearance was very remarkable; a coarse face, marked not with "lines," but what a brother actor with rude wit had called "cordage." He was struggling hard to get free of a very "pronounced" brogue, and having come to the stage with what was to English ears an uncouth name, and to English mouths an almost unpronounceable one, had changed it from M'Laughlin into Mechlin,

and later Macklin. In his company young Garrick found great delight; for his remarks were shrewd, his knowledge of the profession very deep. He had also seen a good deal of the rough and dirty places of life, had undergone the useful discipline of a stroller's life, and met strange adventures. He was a most striking and remarkable character, and one that stands out very distinctly during the whole course of his long career, which stretched over nearly ninety years. He was quarrelsome, overbearing, even savage: always in either revolt or conflict, full of genius, and a spirit that carried him through a hundred misfortunes. "His mind," said one who served under him, Thomas Holcroft, "was as rough and durable as his body. His aspect and address confounded his inferiors; and his delight in making others fear and admire him, gave him an aversion for the society of those who were his superiors." The writer of this graphic sketch adds, "that he never heard him allow the superiority of any man; and that he was so irritable that the slightest opposition was taken as an insult." The history of such a nature, cast upon town at a time when "adventuring" was almost a profession, and when the actor was still almost an adventurer, and had to fight his way desperately against contempt and even law, was sure to be dramatic; and, indeed, the pictures of men like Macklin, Cibber, Quin, and Foote, and of women like Woffington, Bellamy, and Clive, have a roundness of vitality and interest which the regulated monotony of modern times may not let us expect to see again. That Garrick should have lived for so long on intimate terms with such a man, shows his forbearance and sweetness of temper; and when later a quarrel did

come, Macklin's intemperateness became almost a foil for Garrick's moderation and liberality.

But this curious intimacy could be accounted for by a reason which the public did not suspect. Both saw the decay of the stage which had set in, and the genius of both knew how it must be reformed. Macklin had discovered, what Garrick was then discovering, that the best way of representing nature on the stage, was by imitating nature; and both he and his friend saw with impatience the false principles then in fashion. The pair were almost inseparable; and for some five or six years were scarcely a day out of each other's company. They almost lived in Covent Garden—under whose piazzas the actors were always seen walking.

The atmosphere of the acting world about this time was indeed curious. The butchers of Clare Market were influential patrons of the drama, and rallied round a popular favourite in great numbers. These alarming supporters were seen early in the theatre in awful rows, on the night of any expected cabal or tumult. At the coffee-houses were found regular ordinaries, with dinners at from 6*d.* to 1*s.* a head; and for a shilling two courses were served. There was plenty of what was then called "good company" to enjoy it. Upstairs were private rooms; noblemen and "swells" eat apart. Social life was life then; it seemed an anticipation of modern Parisian existence; and the play-house and coffee-house were the home of "the man about town." Ingenious excuses for this sort of society were devised. Strange clubs were formed to promote the same end of conviviality and conversation. There was one, whose members were chiefly players, known as the Walking Club, which had a weekly

dinner at St. Alban's; and the members were pledged never to go in a carriage, but to walk the twenty miles to and from the place of entertainment. The actors swarmed about the regions of the play-houses, the courts and alleys in Little Russell Street, Vinegar Yard, and such haunts, so that, as one of them said, they could be mustered by beat of drum. It is surprising how purely metropolitan London was in these times. People living beyond a radius of fifty miles rarely came in; the provinces had their own metropolis, and it was only persons of condition who "came up" to town. The country gentleman could be detected at a glance from his gray or drab suit, his slouched hat, and uncurled hair. The audiences of that time had their special features also; and how the play-house looked, a glimpse at Hogarth's plates will show. We can see the orange women, whose ranks have furnished so many actresses to the stage; the boxes; the spikes separating the orchestra from the pit—a necessary defence in those days of riot and assault; and the twisted sconces. The boxes were kept for people of rank and condition. The pit, the centre of criticism, was crowded with young merchants, barristers, and students; few women were seen there. It was all left to the professional critics. These sat gravely and listened to the piece; and after it was over adjourned to their favourite coffee-houses, where strangers sat in adjoining boxes, and listened reverently to the criticisms and discussions, given publicly for the benefit of the whole room.

At the Bedford was always seen Doctor Barrowby—friend then to Garrick and Macklin—a fair specimen of the droll, drinking, moneyless creatures who frequented

the coffee-houses about Covent Garden. A man who, had he chosen, might have been a leading physician of the town; but, sitting in coffee-houses, drinking, and criticising plays over his liquor, he very soon sank to be the chartered physician of the players—a not very lucrative round of practice, and perhaps as little profitable to them as it was to him. A life of this sort, spent over a tumbler, was likely to be precarious; and some years later—but not until he had helped to worry Garrick—in a Bow Street coffee-house, he was struck down by what he called a pain in his head, but which turned out to be a stroke of apoplexy. He had his head shaved and rubbed with brandy, and when that failed, said he knew "it was all over with him." He died the next morning, a miserable sacrifice of wit and talent to conviviality.

There was another Doctor in his way quite as strange, who used to "hold forth" on politics and every topic of the day at the Cider Cellar in Maiden Lane, and other places, and the drone of whose chatter Garrick used to say was like the buzzing of a bee. It was this Kennedy, who was found at the Bedford by Quin, in deep distress, because he had not money enough to pay for his chariot to go and attend his practice. Quin generously lent him fifty pounds, and when he applied for payment, received a notification to proceed at his peril, as the Doctor had obtained a privilege of freedom from arrest. Another of these eccentric beings was Carey, a surgeon, who with Whitehead organised a burlesque procession through the streets, which was meant to ridicule the Freemasons.

In such associations the wine business could scarcely flourish. While one member of the firm was

down at a country town, and the other behind the scenes, or writing verses to Chloes and actresses, it is only wonderful that after three or four years' trading *the loss* should have been so little. In truth, David was chafing and fretting against the dull restraints of dockets and invoices. In little more than a year from his father's death came another blow. His mother, literally from grief, followed the husband she so loved to the grave in Lichfield, where she was laid near him.

His friend, Johnson—now working out a miserable "per sheetage" from the very humblest hack work, and almost depending for his crust on some little article that he could now and again get into "The Gentleman's Magazine,"—was by this time intimate with Mr. Cave, of St. John's Gate, the publisher of that journal. Johnson mentioned his companion, and, speaking of his gay dramatic talents, inspired this plain and practical bookseller with some curiosity, and it was agreed that an amateur performance should take place in a room over the archway, with Mr. Garrick in a leading comic character. It was duly arranged: the piece fixed on was Fielding's "Mock Doctor." Several of the printers were called in, parts were given to them to read; and there is an epilogue to the "Mock Doctor," by Garrick, which, as it was inserted shortly afterwards in "The Gentleman's Magazine," would seem to have been spoken on this occasion.* This shows how absorbing was his taste for the stage—sure to break out when there was the slightest promise of an opening. The performance

* Sir J. Hawkins.

gave great amusement, and satisfied the sober Cave; and presently, perhaps as a mark of the publisher's satisfaction, some of Mr. Garrick's short love verses were admitted into the poetical department of the magazine. He took part in another amateur performance —where he was assisted by a more remarkable actor.

With Hogarth at this time he was on terms of warm friendship; and Chancellor Hoadly, who was passionately devoted to any shape of theatricals, with the great actor, and the great painter, made up a trio who enjoyed each other's company. Once they arranged a burlesque of "Julius Cæsar" for private representation—but their difficulty was Hogarth, who, full of excellent humour, found his memory utterly fail him. A device was at last thought of—which was to write his part in pretty large characters, upon the paper covering of the lantern which he was carrying, and which was illuminated from within. A humorous play-bill of the performance was illustrated by the painter.

Now visiting every theatre, seeing every player, liking a few, but abhorring the stilted plain chaunt, the stiff motions then in fashion, which the audience by unnatural training had been forced to accept and even relish, but which he himself knew to be wrong, and loathed, David took up his pen and dashed off criticisms which he could get inserted in some journal. It was remembered that these were acute and unconventional, but above all were distinguished by a kindly and liberal spirt, very different from the "slashing" style of the common "hack" critics,* and literary bludgeon men.

* Davies.

We can conceive a very gay and bright picture of the young merchant "on town," full of gaiety and spirits, welcome at many tables for his wit and liveliness, and asserting his title to be a youth of "literary parts," by throwing off verses. Now, a young buck declines to walk with him in the park, on the plea that young Garrick is not finely dressed enough, which brings out the following smart jingle:—

"Friend *Col* and I, both full of whim,
To shun each other oft agree,
For I'm not beau enough for him,
And he's too much a beau for me.
Then let us from each other fly,
And arm-in-arm no more appear,
That I may ne'er offend your eye,
That you may ne'er offend my ear."

This found its way into the poet's corner of "The Gentleman's Magazine," with some others, signed with the letter "G." From the turn of these it can be seen that he was more engrossed with pleasure and devotion to the fair, than with tasting wines.*

But his connexion with Drury Lane had already begun. In November, 1740, the whole city was thrown into a tumult of joy at Admiral Vernon's victory over the Spanish. Nothing was heard but the "gallant Vernon—the brave Vernon;" and on the 28th of that month the "brave Peddie's" whole ship's crew was invited to Drury Lane to see the "Tempest" acted, in presence of the Prince of Wales and other

* Thus he addressed Chloe:—

"If fools admire, or whining coxcombs toast,
The vain coquettes the trifling triumph boast;
Proned to enslave, they roll their conquering eyes,
Fond of the fame, though careless of the prize:
A nobler fame be generous Chloe's care,
Empowered to wound—how glorious 'tis to spare.

G."

persons of distinction. The proceeds were distributed among the tars, who after the play came on the stage and returned their thanks. Young Mr. Garrick recollected a sea song which his friend Gilbert Walmsley had written, and having himself added an apropos stanza, it was sung on the stage by Mr. Lowe in presence of all "Peddie's tars" :—

"Come, my lads, with souls befitting,
Let us never be dismay'd.
Let's avenge the wrongs of Britain,
And support her injured trade.
The true spirit of the nation
In our honest hearts we bring;
True, tho' in an humble station,
To our country and our king."

Garrick's addition is much more spirited, and has the true nautical chime :—

"Hark! the roaring cannon thunders—
See, my lads, six ships appear—
Every Briton, acting wonders,
Strikes the southern world with fear.
Porto Bello, fam'd in story,
Now at last submits to fate;
Vernon's courage gives us glory,
And his mercy proves us great."*

The pleasant social qualities of the young man had also found him friends among the professional actors, and given him the *entrée* to the *coulisses* at Drury Lane, then managed by Fleetwood.† Here he had the delight of seeing a dramatic trifle of his own brought out—perhaps what he had written at Edial House—a kind of mythological sketch called "Lethe," which turned upon the meeting of various types of character on the other side of the Styx. It was pro-

* Mr. Cave took care to inform his readers in a note that the additional lines were added by his "ingenious correspondent, G." He recollected the performance at St. John's Gate.

† "His facetious good-humour," says Chetwood.

duced on April 1, 1740. It was a mere sketch, that left a great deal to the actor, but was always a favourite with the author; for he was ever touching on it, adding now a new character for Woodward—another for Mrs. Clive. Later still he put in a gouty old Lord Chalkstone, who was afterwards developed into a round and really finely-coloured figure in the five-act comedy of "The Clandestine Marriage."* But yet another alteration was to draw him behind the scenes, and a new actress, handsome, vivacious, and playing very much in the style which he himself approved, was now to fascinate him. His excuse might be the true genius and brilliancy of the syren; but he could then have scarcely dreamed of the snare that was spread for him, and of the dangers he was so happily to escape.

Now, in 1740, the English stage had received a welcome contribution from the Dublin Theatre—that faithful sister who has trained and parted with so many brilliant artists. Margaret Woffington, a young girl only twenty-two years old, had come to London, had been engaged by Rich at Drury Lane, and caused a genuine *furore*. Though there were some, like Mr. Conway, who found her merely "an impudent Irish-faced girl," others perceived she was a real actress, and that her "impudence" was not mere stage pertness, but true and

* The first shape of the "Lethe" was very meagre indeed. I have seen the MS. of its last state among Mr. Garrick's papers, prepared for a reading which he gave to the king and queen after he had retired from the stage. He had added Lady Featherly and a German Jew, who spoke in this fashion: "I be Jarman by pirth, a proker by profession, and a Chew by religion."—(Hill MSS.) Their Majesties were not much amused, and indeed the choice of that character was not made with the actor's usual tact. He owned himself afterwards that he had no idea it was so bad.

genuine "spirit," which carried her triumphantly through all her characters and supplied a thousand defects. Even Walpole, while denying she had merit, said, "she had life." Her story has been often told, in memoir and romance,—even on the stage itself. Her curious life was itself a play; her being picked out of the streets at Fownes Court, her playing *Macheath* as an infant prodigy in Madame Violante's Lilliputian Company, at the booth off Dame Street,* and her bewitching the gentlemen of Dublin with her dashing sketch of *Sir Harry Wildair*.

From her portraits we can see that this notorious lady was not a bold, rosy-cheeked hoyden, as we might expect; but had an almost demure, placid, and pensive cast of face. She wore her hair without powder, and turned back behind the ear, nearly always with a cap carelessly thrown back, or a little flat garden hat, set negligently on, *à la* Nelly O'Brian. Certainly a deeply interesting face, but with a little hint of foolishness and air of "lightness" in all its calm, pale placidity.†

* At the beginning of an old Dublin edition of the "Devil to Pay," are given parts by "Miss Woffington" and "Master Woffington." King, the actor, told the Duke of Leeds that she was one of the children hung to Madame Violante's feet as she performed her daring "act" on the rope. Lee Lewes, the actor, was told by old people that they recollected her a little bare-legged girl, crying "halfpenny salads," in College Green and Dame Street. All that he heard of her in Dublin was infinitely to her credit. Little gratuities were often collected for her on the stage after the child had danced specially well, and these she brought home to her mother. At eleven years old she was put into such characters as *Mrs. Peachum* and *Mother Midnight*.

† At Charlemont House there is a sketch of her, by Hogarth, with a cap, in which is seen this quiet *interesting* air—more insensibility than pensiveness. Mr. Bennett, of Dublin, has an engraving of her, which is perhaps unique, done in 1740, before her London reputation was made, and sold by Brookes, the engraver. There are also three or four highly characteristic mezzotints, one after Pond, another by Eccard, with a Shakspeare in her hand. All wonderfully resemble each other; and in a yet later one, by Pickering, we can see that the face has only grown a little fatter and

The lively Garrick, then delighting in actors' society, and free of every green-room, was charmed with the new heroine. He became one of the many admirers of her gifts, but he had the good taste to object to her playing such a part as *Sir Harry*, on sound stage principles. No woman, he justly urged, could ever so overcome the physical difficulties of voice, and figure, as to identify herself with a man's part. There can be no illusion; character is sacrificed to pantomimic exhibition, and the result is a mere *tour de force*. It was a great attempt for a woman, he said, but still was not *Sir Harry Wildair*. So just and correct was even then his idea of dramatic propriety. He presently became deeply in love, and the actress seemed no less taken with him. Curiously enough, they were almost the same age. He did not see in her what the men about town so much admired, the sauciness and boldness, which even in our own day seeks to captivate by an effrontery of speech and bearing, and a wearisome succession of "breeches parts," but was taken, we may be sure, by the half-pensive, half-sad expression, and fancied an ideal that could be capable of real love and true happiness. Indeed, the whole of this *amour*, as it must be called, turns out on examination so different from the vulgar notion handed down by the Macklins, Murphys, and others, that it becomes a valuable illustration of Garrick's character, and will be worth dwelling on for a short time. And it will be shown, and for the first time, that he was all through looking to an honourable attachment, an

rounder. The Hogarth can be seen in the Garrick Club collection, and makes us think of Lamb's description—"the Woffington (a true Hogarth) on a couch, dallying and dangerous."

honourable establishment in life, with one whom he could sincerely esteem. Under the follies and failings, which he fancied were those of the hour, he saw the generous nature, the honest purpose—the warm impulse, and the sense of loyalty and duty to her profession, which might in time be earnest for her sense of duty to herself.

Margaret Woffington, it must be remembered, had many gifts and accomplishments that were of an intellectual sort. She was indeed a captivating creature. Her male characters were her smallest attraction. She could play parts like *Millamant* and *Lady Townly*, which required all the wit and graces of comedy To have made her *début* in *Sylvia* and not in *Sir Harry* showed a nice sense of propriety. She could speak French admirably, and dance with infinite grace. She had a taste for reading, and above all possessed a kind, generous heart, that could do a good-natured thing. The charity so well painted in Mr. Reade's excellent romance and drama, is scarcely overdrawn. Her mother, whom she always decently supported, was long seen in Dublin—a respectable old lady in a velvet cloak, with a deep fringe, a diamond ring and agate snuff-box,—going from one Catholic chapel to another, and gossiping a good deal with her neighbours. Murphy, who knew the actress well, and had many conversations with her, pays her the warmest tribute. "Forgive her," he said, "one female error, and it might fairly be said of her 'that she was adorned with every virtue; honour, truth, benevolence and charity were her distinguishing qualities.' Her conversation was in a style always pleasing and often instructive. She abounded in wit." Allowing some-

thing for Murphy's habitual extravagance of language, this may be accepted as fair testimony. The wit must have been only the readiness of a bold woman; but there was present also an incurable unsteadiness, and a fatal taste for the pleasures of the hour, which it became hopeless to think of overcoming. For that "one female error" there may be some extenuation, considering the state from which the stage was then emerging, and that the *coulisses* were open as of right and as lawful pasture to every man of quality or reputation.*

When the new actress came out in *Sylvia* in "The Recruiting Officer," Garrick took the usual fashionable mode of celebrating her charms in rhyme. The tone of these verses is very refined; and the hint that she should not regard mere light admirers, but one who really loved her, showed that his attachment had, at least, begun on pure principles.

"SONG.

"TO SYLVIA.

"If truth can fix thy wavering heart,
Let Damon urge his claim;
He feels the passion void of art,
The pure, the constant flame.

"Though sighing swains their torments tell,
Their sensual love contemn;
They only prize the beauteous shell,
But slight the inward gem.

* * * *

"By age your beauty will decay,
Your mind improve with years;
As when the blossoms fade away
The ripening fruit appears.

"May heaven and Sylvia grant my suit
And bless the future hour,
That Damon who can taste the fruit,
May gather every flow'r."

* "One female error," in Murphy's loose English, means, of course, "one female *failing*." For her errors in this department were indeed legion.

The turn of two other stanzas addressed to the same object, showed that *Sylvia* could relish the wit of Prior, and that her admirer could advance his suit by the respectful tactics usual in the case of ladies of reputation. These lines were written in *Sylvia's* "Prior":—

"Untouch'd by love, unmoved by wit,
I found no charms in MATTHEW'S lyre;
But unconcerned read all he writ,
Though love and Phœbus did inspire.

"Till SYLVIA *took her favourite's* part,
Resolv'd to prove my judgment wrong,
Her proofs prevailed, they reached my heart,
As soon I felt the poet's song."*

Stanzas certainly neater and less vapid than the average specimens of magazine poetry.

Another copy of verses was going round the town, which was then, and has always since been, attributed to the ingenious Mr. Garrick. It was addressed to the actress, set to music, sung in drawing-rooms, and deservedly admired for its gaiety and spirit. "Lovely Peggy" was highly relished, and often called for.

"Once more I'll tune the vocal shell,
To hills and dales my passion tell,
A flame which time can never quell
That burns for thee, my Peggy!

"Yet greater bards the lyre shall hit,
Or say what subject is more fit,
Than to record the sparkling wit
And bloom of lovely Peggy.

"The sun first rising in the morn
That paints the dew-bespangled lawn,
Does not so much the day adorn
As does my lovely Peggy.

* It was, of course, his friend and schoolfellow, Sam Johnson, then drudging with Mr. Sylvanus Urban, that secured admission for these trifles to "The Gentleman's Magazine."

"And when in Thetis' lap to rest
He streaks with gold the ruddy west,
She's not so beauteous as undrest
Appears my lovely Peggy.
* * * *
"While bees from flower to flower shall rove
And linnets warble through the grove,
Or stately swans the river love,
So long shall I love Peggy.

"And when Death with his pointed dart,
Shall strike the blow that rives my heart,
My words shall be, when I depart,
Adieu, my lovely Peggy!"*

These gay verses are from another hand, and the work of a rival admirer,—Sir Charles Hanbury Williams,—whose touch was more elegant, and who was now ardently pressing his suit. Such a tone of address seemed almost too familiar for the serious passion of David Garrick, and it is characteristic evidence of the different fashion in which the rival lovers regarded the lady. Both had, as it were, started together—both found their way behind the scenes on her first success, and were now rhyming against each other. Garrick seems to have been preferred—for a time at least; and when he was seriously yet tenderly warning *Sylvia*, his rival was about the same time complaining, in burlesque lamentation, how little progress *he* had made:—

"Should you reject my ardent prayer,
Yet send not back the am'rous paper;
My pangs may help to curl your hair,
My passion fringe the glowing taper.

* Abundant as are the rhymes of Garrick, addressed to persons of every degree and character, he cannot lay claim to this pleasant song. It was found among Sir C. Hanbury Williams's papers—seems to have been acknowledged as his by Walpole, and indeed is not in Garrick's manner. But the decisive proof of their authorship is, that it is not to be found in the large, carefully written collection which Garrick himself had collected and carefully prepared for the press with all his early verses to "Sylvia," and nearly every scrap he had written.

"No more the theatre I'll seek
But when I'm promised there to find you.
All Horton's merits now grow weak,
And Clive remains far, far behind you."

Williams soon discovered the progress the other lover was making, and even tried to win her by appealing, as Garrick had done, to her intellectual qualities. But his compliments are scarcely respectful, and show what was the tone of mind of the fashionable man "of parts" at that day—coarse, unfeeling, and ungentlemanly. His friends, the Selwyns, Marches, Storers, were all of the same gross and even heartless pattern.

"Though Peggy's charms have oft been sung—
The darling theme of every tongue—
New praises still remain;
But I'm in love with Peggy's mind,
Where every virtue is combined
That can adorn the fair.

"Excepting one you cannot miss,
So trifling that you would not wish
That virtue had been there.
She who professes all the rest
Must sure excel the prude whose breast
That virtue shares alone."*

The same reason, too, that drew him to Macklin, drew him also to the new actress. Part of the secret of her success was owing to her free and unconventional vivacity, though in tragedy she seems to have adhered to the still existing fashion. But her freedom, gaiety, and variety, and, above all, her unflagging spirit, entitles her to a place among the reformers of the stage. Garrick and Macklin were only waiting for their opportunity. No doubt the three—constantly in each

* Among these poems were found some lines addressed to a "Kitty Walker," but which Walpole—in his notes to Sir C. H. Williams' works—believed to be meant for Mrs. Woffington, and in which he shows he had not enjoyed the same favour as his more fortunate rival.

"Why to me these fond embraces,
While another has your heart?"

other's society—had often laughed at the stiff solemnities of the Delanes, Hales, and Quins. For Macklin at last came the opening; and about ten months before Garrick's own turn came, he astonished the town by playing *Shylock*, not as a comic Jew, whose distresses convulsed the house, as it had been defaced by Lord Lansdowne, but with the passionate and pathetic reading of the original. He took the unusual course of "breaking-up" the speeches, interrupting them with bursts of grief or rage, changing from fury to affection—things which came upon the audience with surprise, and transported them with delight. This performance drew for nineteen nights, an astonishing run then. This was the first step; and to Macklin, not to Garrick, must be given the credit of having attempted a reform.* Yet, successful as it was, it seems to have been but incomplete, from his not having acquired a hold upon the town. His powers, which were exerted on such coarse characters as *Sir Archy* and *Sir Pertinax*, and which in the savage portions of *Shylock* excited repulsion, and actually made people associate his own character with the part he played, wanted delicacy, and the infinite variety, requisite for a great triumph. It must be remembered also that the piece was a novelty, and Shakspeare's vindictive Jew, a genuine novelty.

* Pope paid him the compliment of attending the performance—and noticed the correct taste of the actor in playing the part in a *red* hat—the colour worn by Italian Jews. He well might ask, did the existing players take such pains. He also honoured him with the well-known couplet, "This is the Jew, &c."—to which Quin, full of spleen and mortification, is said to have added a coarse third line.

CHAPTER II.

THE STATE OF THE STAGE.

1741.

THE old history of the stage and the peculiar position of actors previous to this time have been often told. How, from their entertainment being of a nature to cause crowd and obstruction, they fell necessarily under the class of "vagrants," and could only escape the treatment of vagrants by attaching themselves to the king or to some great nobleman, and even wearing the livery of those august protectors. How they thus became literally "His Majesty's servants," a title retained even when the degrading character had long been abolished, and the king instead had given them a sort of licence or protection, known as a patent. It was not unnatural that there should be a strange feeling among the "good" citizens against the "stage players" and their profession, especially as the vicinity of a playhouse was said to bring with it rapid corruption, and abominations fatal to the order and decency of the neighbourhood. There were other objections, too, arising perhaps from the plays themselves, more than from playhouses, and which made them obnoxious to those in authority.

It is amusing to see how tacitly it was assumed that "the playhouses" were a growing abuse, that might presently assume alarming proportions, and

whose repression it was high time should engage the serious consideration of all good men and heads of families. "The Craftsman," and such papers of the day, are all tuned to this key. The danger lay, they said, in the growing passion of the younger portion of the community for theatrical amusement. "The university," wrote one, "will probably soon supply actors; and the students of the Inns of Court now know more of the laws of the stage, than of the law of the land." "It is incredible," wrote Tindal, "how the play-mongers were followed;" and not unnaturally the solemn citizens, who stood by the Succession in the minutest tittle, and who believed that everything, more or less directly, bore on the Succession and loyalty, augured the worst, when they found their sons and apprentices crowding to the theatres.

During the decade of years that preceded Garrick's coming, there was one theatre in Drury Lane, another in Covent Garden—the first of the series, and built so recently as 1733—and a third newly erected in Goodman's Fields. There were, besides, houses rising in different directions—"saloons" rather—built on speculation, in the hope that some would take them for theatres. Drury Lane—Wren's Drury Lane—had been rebuilt by that great architect, in 1674, after the usual "burning down," and had passed to the wealthy and foolish young Highmore, whose career was an exact parallel to that of a young opera manager of our own day; then from Highmore to Fleetwood; and under these changes seemed to hurry from bad to worse. The Haymarket, situated in one of the worst of theatrical neighbourhoods, in a perfect wilderness—for the "West-End" had not yet come into repute and

fashion,—was defective in its construction; and though built for an opera, the singers' voices seemed to ramble about, with hollow reverberations, as if in the aisles of a cathedral. This, too, had suffered from the general anarchy, and the singers had been driven out by the actors. Lincoln's-Inn Fields was doing well; but for the newest and latest built theatre, was in store a hard struggle for existence; although, almost in its last agony, it was to bring out the famous Roscius of the age. With the director of that House he had now formed a most important theatrical friendship, which was to have a still greater influence on his future career.

Four or five years before, a pretty little theatre had been opened in Goodman's Fields, the scheme for which had been organised by a clever manager and actor, Henry Giffard. This gentleman was of good extraction, like his new friend, Mr. Garrick. He had been put into the South-Sea House, and, like Powell later, had run away from his desk to take to the stage. He had joined some strollers, and finally enlisted under a player called Odell at Goodman's Fields.

It lay a little behind where the Minories now are; and in Ayliffe Street, Goodman's Fields, was a sort of industrial quarter, where weavers and silk-throwsters congregated. In the year 1728, Odell, afterwards made the first Licenser, took a throwster's shop in the street, collected a strolling company, converted it into a sort of temporary theatre, and opened it for plays. The experiment met with success. The situation being so near the city was found convenient, and it soon became a place of resort. They were not interfered with by the authorities; but it seems to have had a disastrous effect on the neighbourhood. The decent

throwsters and hand-weavers were gradually driven out, not on account of a sensitive and outraged morality—as Sir John Hawkins and the "loyal citizens" insinuated—but because the rents rose too high. Every second house had a suspicious bunch of grapes hanging over the door, and became a tavern, or perhaps a bagnio disguised as a tavern.

At this theatre, about the year 1728, had been played "Charles the First," "containing sentiments suited to the character of republicans, sectaries, and enthusiasts, and a scenical representation of that *prince's disastrous reign, better forgotten than remembered.*" Those are the words of that "high Tory" Middlesex magistrate, Sir John Hawkins, who was inexpressibly shocked at this outrage on decency and loyalty. "*Sober persons* thought," he says, in a most amusing and characteristic passage, "that the revival of the memory of past transactions such as these were, would serve no good purpose, but on the contrary perpetuate an enmity between the friends to, and opponents of, *our ecclesiastical and civil establishment.*" This, indeed, helps us to what were the true views of "sober persons," in reference to stage plays, who saw in their amusements a dangerous outlet for free thought and open republicanism.

The adventure would, no doubt, have flourished, but for an inflammatory sermon given in St. Botolph's, at which, it is said, the manager lost heart, and finally disposed of his house to Giffard, who stood in less awe of the Church. This actor had marked the success of the temporary stage, and saw what could be done with improvement. He purchased the throwsters' house, and opened a subscription in twenty-three shares of a

hundred pounds each, for building a regular theatre. This project was taken up eagerly, especially as each subscriber was to receive one and sixpence for each acting "day," and a free admission. Everything was done in the handsomest manner. A "new beautiful convenient theatre,"—to use Chetwood's quaint words,—rose where the old altered shop had stood. Shepherd, an architect of repute, and the architect of Covent Garden Theatre, furnished the design.* The interior was handsomely decorated; and, on the 2nd of October, 1732, the new theatre—the one in which Garrick was to play nine years later—was opened with "King Henry the Fourth." It was conducted with great spirit and propriety; still "others," says Sir John, in another most amusing and characteristic passage, "looked on this new-erected theatre with an eye more penetrating: the merchants of London, *then* a grave, sagacious body of men, found that it was a temptation to idleness and pleasure that their clerks could not resist. . . . The principal of these was Sir John Barnard, a wise and venerable man and a good citizen: he, as a magistrate, had for some time been watching *for such information as would bring the actors at Goodman's Fields within the reach of the vagrant laws.*"†

This extraordinary confession shows in what a diffi-

* Geneste, painstaking and careful, and an excellent authority on all matters concerning the stage, seems to think Odell's theatre was a distinct one, and situated in Leman Street. But Curl says that Giffard *rebuilt* Odell's theatre. Geneste's reasons for his belief are, 1st, that Giffard in his proposals had not yet fixed on a site; 2nd, that Chetwood had rebuilt an entire new and elegant theatre. These are really no reasons.

† Sir John, a justice himself, must have had all this from brother justices; and it is quite plain from the spirit of his remarks, that he heartily sympathised with them, and even at the time he wrote seemed to lament that the Vagrant Act could not be "wrested" a little.

cult position were the unhappy comedians. They were really the Pariahs of the nation.

Great crowds flocked to the new theatre. It drew chiefly apprentices and young students, who all became bitten with a stage passion; superadded to which was a desire for playing themselves. This produced fresh combinations and fresh companies. A new house of entertainment was opened in York Buildings: another was talked of at St. Martin's-le-Grand. "A fellow called Potter" opened another in the Haymarket. In short, it did almost seem that some sort of legislation, not for the suppression, but for the regulation, of such places, was called for. Unless some legal steps were taken, a lugubrious opponent prophesied that "the whole nation would degenerate into a set of stage players." As for Goodman's Fields, by this time it had become encircled, according to Sir John Hawkins's extraordinary expression, "by a halo of bagnios."

This tone of the "sober persons" was greatly favoured by the dissensions of the players themselves, who were loudly appealing to the public against each other. In the year after the opening of the new Goodman's Fields theatre, there was a revolt at Drury Lane, and the leading players left their manager, the foolish spendthrift, Highmore, and set up at "the French House," as the Haymarket was then called, under the leadership of Theophilus Cibber. The deserted manager struggled on for a time with great gallantry, and at a steady loss of some fifty pounds a week, which, however, he met with strict honour. At last, losing all patience, he was advised by his lawyers to take a most injudicious step to destroy the rebels, and for which he counted on the unfriendly feeling of the authorities. He

recollected the popular notion of the players being "rogues and vagrants," who had "no settlement," and it was hoped, that, by some outrageous wresting of the Vagrant Act, a conviction might be obtained. The very idea was monstrous, but not more monstrous than the ignorance which guided all proceedings in the matter. They chose Harper, a lusty, stout actor, who was said to play *Falstaff* more coarsely than Gwin, but yet caused greater laughter. He was a respectable citizen, with a house in St. Paul's, Covent Garden, a voter, and a freeholder in Surrey; and it is said that he was selected as the victim, because of a gentle and timorous disposition. A justice, whose name has been preserved, one Thomas Clarges, was found to sign a committal, and the unfortunate actor was actually dragged to a house of correction, as "a rogue and a vagrant."

This arbitrary act caused a perfect storm. His friends took up the case warmly, and he was brought up under writ of *habeas corpus*, before Lord Hardwicke at Westminster Hall. Mr. Abney, the prisoner's counsel, argued the case, merely on the committal. The Middlesex magistrate had written that, whereas the prisoner "appeared to him to have no visible way of livelihood, but was a common player of interludes, he adjudged him to be a rogue and a vagabond, and sent him to the keeper of the House of Correction to be kept to hard labour until the first day of sessions." Even as to mere form, this document was faulty. It did not set out that the magistrate had jurisdiction, as required by the statute, nor that the information was made by an inhabitant; nor was the time of his offence given,—nor the time of incarceration defined—all re-

quired by the statute. Counsel further contended that the spirit of the Act was, that it should apply to vagrancy strictly, as indeed it will appear to any one who reads it carefully; and that the prisoner did not even come under the justice's own warrant, which described him as "a common player of interludes," Harper being a comedian and actor of eminence. The Chief Justice, when the court came to give judgment, spoke strongly against the whole proceeding, and pronounced the warrant bad, because it did not describe the prisoner "as a vagrant," and thus bring him within the words of the Act. At the same time he discharged the prisoner on his own recognizances, so that the other side might renew the proceedings as they thought fit.* The whole caused a perfect ferment, and the actor left the hall amid the acclamations of the crowd.† There were many at the time ready to strain an Act of Parliament, in the cause of loyalty and order, but the Chief Justice was too constitutional a judge for such a course. Even when one of the lawyers lightly proposed putting off the case, he gave him a reproof, saying that when the liberty of a subject was involved, it was a matter not to be so treated.

Still the prosecutor had the sympathies of those in authority, with him. The growing evil was narrowly watched, and it is said that an order was sent to Goodman's Fields stopping the performance, to which however no attention was paid. But it was now to attract the attention of Parliament.

* See this case reported, with a pith and brevity that would confound our modern reporters, in Lee, vol. 2, p. 349. Committal, argument, and judgment only fill a page.

† Sir J. Hawkins discreetly makes no allusion to this failure.

The "wise and venerable" Sir John Barnard was in the House, a good specimen of an independent member—troublesome, supported by the "sober persons," a little dreaded by the minister, and noted for a rude, unpolished style of delivery and speech, which was garnished with such flowers as "if so be," "set in case," &c.; and, in the year 1735, he brought the state of the theatres before the House. He made members smile by his over-coloured pictures of the abuses which existed, and of the destruction to which the nation was hurrying; and then proposed a bill to restrain the number of the theatres. But he was left behind by another speaker, who, in a truly British speech, deplored the changes in the English nation, which, although it could be "cheerful and facetious, and was still a sober and sedate people" by nature, yet had actually left behind "the fiddling, fluttering" French—there being actually double the number of theatres here, there was in Paris! This was touching the true note—contempt of French and foreigners. It was astonishing to all Europe, said this real "county member," to see *that eunuchs and signoras* should have salaries equal to that of Lords of the Treasury or Judges—with much more to the same effect. Yet the bill received general support, Walpole, and the not too straitly-laced Pulteney, both supporting it. After some delays, it was finally "dropped," owing, it is said, to the King requiring a clause to be inserted, which, added to the despotic power of his Chamberlain, already considered too overgrown. But the "sober persons" were not to be thus daunted. According to their case, the evils were daily increasing. One sober person in trade found a place of this fatal amusement opened suddenly next door to him.

Instantly the little business street became blocked up with fashionable carriages, and his carts coming to unload could not draw up, or, if drawn up, were ordered out of the way by insolent footmen.

But the stage itself helped them. For, in the mean time, Fielding had been giving his pen license at the Haymarket, in his amusing farce of "Pasquin" (from which "The Critic" was to be later stolen), and it was no doubt this dangerous freedom that made the Government bring forward a bill which should deal with actors, as well as with the plays they performed.* In 1737 this severe measure was brought in, and passed successfully,—a most degrading one for the

* This remarkable play—which caused the Licensing Act to be passed—deserves much of the credit the "Critic" now unfairly enjoys. Are not the following passages merely *altered* by Sheridan? There is even a "Sneerwell" among the characters.

"*Fust.* What ill usage, Mr. Trapwit? for, if I mistake not, this is the first time these lovers spoke to one another.

Trap. A great deal, sir.

Fust. When, sir? when, sir?

Trap. Why behind the scenes, sir. . . . .

Trap. Open your arms, miss. Let me have one of your best embraces, I desire. Do it once more, pray. There, there, that's pretty well. You must practise this behind the scene."

Again:—

"*Fireb.* Avert these omens, ye auspicious stars!

Fust. What omens? Where the devil is the thunder and lightning?

Promp. Why don't you let go the thunder there? and flash your rosin.

Fust. Now sir, begin if you please. I desire, sir, you will get a larger thunderbowl, and two pennyworth more of lightning against the representation."

Again:—

"*Scene discovers* COMMON SENSE, *asleep.*

Sneer. Pray, sir, who's that upon the couch asleep.

Fust. I thought you had known her better, sir. It's *Common Sense*, asleep.

Sneer. But how will the audience be brought to conceive any probable reason for this sleep?

Fust. Why, sir, she has been meditating on the present general peace of Europe."

player. For it was actually an amendment of the Rogue and Vagrant Act,—thus showing the Middlesex Dogberry, Thomas Clarges, that if he had mistaken the letter of the law, he had only anticipated what was to be its spirit. By one section in this act,* any one without a settlement in the parish, or with no patent, was to be dealt with criminally as a rogue and vagabond; and if he had a settlement, and neither patent nor licence, he was to be fined at the suit of any informer. By another section, every piece was to be sent to the Chamberlain fourteen days before representation.

It was opposed gallantly in the Upper House by the great Earl of Chatham—who, in an eloquent and masterly speech, showed the illogical and arbitrary character of the measure. But his reasoning was of no avail—and the clumsy, ill-drawn, vexatious Licensing Act, the plague of lawyers, magistrates, and judges, and to this day the oppression of humble followers of the profession, was passed by a large majority.† To this hour we feel the result of Sir John Barnard's and his "sober persons'" prejudices in the harassing and unsatisfactory discussions as to the title of "Music Halls," and such places, to perform "stage plays," with the incidental difficulties of defining what shall amount to a "stage

* 10 Geo. 2, cap. 19, the well known Licensing Act.

† Lord Chatham seemed to foresee the confusion of our own time, for he deprecates the haste with which it was brought on at the end of the session. He showed that it was virtually trenching on the freedom of the press, for that the existing laws were quite sufficient to reach libellous publications; that this act allowed the interdicted plays to be *published*, perhaps with the very notice of its being forbidden on the title, as an inducement to buyers; that it was putting a very arbitrary power into the hands of a single man. Still Lord Chatham's specimen of "the remarkable licentiousness" of Fielding's piece, is highly characteristic: its author "having thought fit to represent the three great professions, religion, physic, and the law, as inconsistent with common sense."

play." When the whole question shall be re-opened, which it must be shortly, it should be considered what was the *object* of those who passed the bill—which was to check the spoken licence of *the plays*, and secure that every drama should be submitted to censorship; while, *en passant*, as it were, a *clause was inserted on the motion of Sir John Barnard*, "and a very judicious one it was," says Sir John Hawkins—to *make penal*, even under due licence from the Chamberlain—the acting of a play in any part of Britain save in Westminster, or in such place as the Sovereign in person should be residing. The effect of this degrading act was, that a licence was required to perform in Westminster, but that in any other part of the kingdom, plays, even with a licence, were virtually prohibited.

This victory put the enemies of the stage in great heart. On Giffard—who had recently completed his "elegant new" theatre—the blow fell with great severity. He petitioned both Houses on the special hardship of his case—the large sums he had expended on the purchase, the rebuilding, the clothes, property, &c.; but the petition of "a mere player" was not likely to receive much attention.* He had no resource, then, but to continue playing—trusting that no one would like to incur the odium of such a persecution. He is said to have received an order requiring him to close—but with some courage paid no attention to it. Indeed, it was not difficult to "pick a hole" in this Act. After the failure in Harper's case, no one could hope to put in force the clause in reference to

* In the Museum are the "Cases" of the Players and Proprietors.

an actor having no settlement.* Mere strollers, who ranged from theatre to theatre, fell easily under the Act; but the more respectable comedians found out a trick of renting a house at £10 per annum, and "paying scot and lot," which was discovered to answer. It was not so easy to get over the next clause, which applied to acting without licence. Still, here, the manager of Goodman's Fields found a successful device. He advertised a *concert*—which there was no question could not be brought within the Act; and, after the concert, entertained his audience with a play *gratis*. This was a mere illusory pretence,—but the very stringency and intolerance of the law was his protection, and he was allowed to continue the practice for two or three years. Such was a happy toleration; for to it was owing the undisturbed first appearance of the most famous actor on the English stage.

Under this disability, however, Goodman's Fields flourished. There Mr. Walker declaimed, and Miss Hippisley danced and sang, while Yates was the "general utility" actor. It closed about the month of March, 1741; but before the end of the season was brought out a Pantomime, called "Harlequin Student, or the Fate of Pantomime, with a representation of Shakspeare's Monument, lately erected." Yates played the Harlequin—a character requiring more respectable ability than it does at present, and approaching the Italian type. One night, however, the Harlequin was indisposed, just as the piece was beginning, and the gay and sprightly young wine merchant secretly

* The law had mended its hand here, and had pronounced acting without a "settlement" vagrancy; whereas, before, it was a matter of construction under Anne's Act, whether acting was vagrancy.

agreed with the manager that he should take his place,—then putting on the dress and mask, went through two or three scenes of the part. No one knew of it, then. So that, not at Ipswich, but at Goodman's Fields, was Mr. Garrick's first appearance on any stage.*

Giffard would willingly have given him the opening he wished for on the boards of his modest, but handsome and well conducted, little theatre; but gave him the sensible advice, to first try his strength and powers on a provincial audience; and the youth, with more restraint than many a *débutant*, was wise enough to take the advice. Here was certainly an opportunity: Giffard and Dunstall were going with a *troupe* down to Ipswich. This was not a "strolling" party, but they intended to have a little season there. Among the players was Yates, an excellent comedian, one of Garrick's own school of natural actors, and whose rule was, on receiving a new part, to fix on some living person who was a little like it, study him attentively, and thus gain *vitality* for it.

The Ipswich audience were treated to excellent acting—of course with the degrading evasion of the concert and the play *gratis*—but they were chiefly struck by an actor named Lyddal. Mr. Lyddal made his first appearance in "Aboan," the black Lieutenant of Oroonoko—the blunt and truculent character of that most pathetic piece. It is, however, a merely secondary character, but was perhaps just of suitable breadth and size—not too overpowering, nor at the same time too trifling, for a *débutant* to try his strength

* Forster MSS. Davies, evidently relying on a mere shape of this story, says that he played Harlequin at Ipswich.

with. Mr. Lyddal was young Mr. Garrick. This was not a mere fanciful name—one of the theatrical "St. Clairs" or "Mortimers," under which the actor chooses to hide his less dignified style and title. The manager of the company had long before married an Irish Miss Lyddal, daughter of an actor and actress, both on the Dublin boards. This name would have thus readily offered itself; or he might have wished to pass as a connection of Giffard's.* All Garrick's biographers have passed by this very obvious reason for choosing such a name. Davies says, rather absurdly, that he had been determined in the choice of his character by the disguise of a blackened face which would protect him in case of failure. But in Ipswich the face of Mr. Garrick would have been as little known as that of any strange Mr. Lyddal; and the chances of "failure" before *that* audience were not very probable. Nor would failure there have done much harm. He was received very warmly,—then played *Chamont* in the "Orphan," without any pigment on his cheeks to hide him from his audience. In this he made a still greater success; so much so, that Mr. Lyddal next attempted comedy—the bold, rollicking part of *Sir Harry Wildair*, in which he had had the best of lessons from Mrs. Woffington herself, the "rattling" *Sir Harry*. With this he made a "hit," though it was after considered one of his failures; and not merely the townsfolk but even the county squires came flocking in to see him. Then he gave *Captain Brazen* in the "Recruiting Officer," a more important part than the *Sergeant Kite* he had played

* See Chetwood's curious little History, with its complimentary distich for every actor.

with the Lichfield children years before. One of the Giffards, alive in the present century, would relate how the great Garrick had once played *Osric* to his *Hamlet.* Yates, long after, used to tell *his* friends of this remarkable little expedition, and no doubt was mortally jealous of the success of the new actor. Yet what he may have thought was taking the bread out of his mouth, turned out fortunately for him; for when Garrick came to the command of a theatre, the very first thing he did was to engage Yates.* No wonder after such successes he returned to town utterly unsettled. The wine business became dreary to him. His sober brother, Peter, down at Lichfield, little dreamed of the "degrading" freak his relation had been perpetrating.

Flushed with this success he applied for an engagement to the managers of the two greater houses—to Rich and to Fleetwood. His offers were declined. The town managers might smile a little scornfully at mere Ipswich credentials. A small, well-made young man, of genteel appearance, seemed scarcely of the stuff for a tragedian of the first class; for this was of course the office he was aiming at, and no meaner rank would have been accepted. Indeed, the time for final decision was drawing on, and the difficulties which he knew he must face, arising chiefly from the "genteel" prejudices of his family down at Lichfield, weighed heavily on him. A greater trial to his candid, open nature was the having to counterfeit an interest in their business, when Peter arrived in town on a visit from Lichfield. He knew how shocked the

* John Taylor often heard him telling of the Ipswich party. In fact, Yates was the authority for all details in the matter, and must have told Davies and Murphy all they have given.

decent brother would be, and the little coterie of canons, soldiers, doctors, who made up "genteel" society there, at such a piece of news. But he had made up his mind for good. It was perhaps the best course he could take; and as failure and bankruptcy were sure to come presently, from this state of indecision, it was wiser to make the experiment—to win or fail, and thus settle matters finally one way or the other. The necessity for concealment in presence of his solemn brother—the serious responsibility and struggle—threw him into the utmost dejection of spirits, and brought on a severe illness—two visitations unaccounted for—which must have "intrigued" the provincial brother sadly. But he returned home to Lichfield without a suspicion of the cause.

Thus time passed by. Suddenly in the year 1741, on a certain morning in October, Mr. Peter Garrick received two letters—one from Dr. Swinfen, a family friend and physician, who knew and attended the Johnson and Garrick families,—the other from his brother, Mr. David Garrick. Both were to the same effect; and both contained the fatal piece of news, broken to the shocked Peter, with every art of excuse and appeal to brotherly affection and personal interest. The step had been taken, "the Rubicon crossed:" on the night before, Mr. David Garrick had appeared before a London audience at Goodman's Fields Theatre with the most astounding success!

CHAPTER III.

FIRST APPEARANCE.

1741—1742.

THE two letters must have spread dismay and grief through the Garrick household; as, indeed, every line of them seemed to anticipate. Mr. Swinfen wrote with the good sense of age and experience, but evidently approached the subject with trepidation. "There were many," he began, "who because their fathers were called gentlemen, or perhaps themselves the first, will think it a disgrace and a scandal that a child of theirs should attempt to earn an honest livelihood, and not be content to live all his life in a scanty manner because his father was a gentleman." This was clearly the Lichfield theory. "But he knows very well that his friend, 'Mr. Peter Garwick'"—so he spells it—"will not be guided by the prejudices of certain of their country friends, accustomed to strollers; people who form their judgment on what we used to so laugh at in the old Lichfield days, when the Hallams, and Herberts, and Hales came round." But as he does not doubt but that Mr. Peter would soon hear the news "that *my good friend David Garwick performed last night* at Goodman's Fields Theatre, for fear he should hear a false or malicious account, I will give you the truth, which much pleased me. *For I was there*," goes on this good friend, "and was witness to

the most general applause he gained in the character of King Richard y^e^ Third. For I believe there was not one in the house that was not in raptures, and I heard several men of judgment declare it their opinion that nobody ever excelled him in the part; and that they were surprised that, with so peculiar a genius, how it was possible for him to keep off the stage so long." This was all friendly and rational; but to one that believed the step itself was degradation, the news at best was but that of success in that degradation.

The same post brought David's letter; and it is now curious to look at the faded coffee-coloured writing, and think how the fingers that penned that writing were almost trembling with the excitement of the night before. "Dear Peter," it began; and with an affectation of carelessness, goes on to tell him "how the shirt came down safe." He has now to announce to him what, he supposes, he has already heard—though it is proper to preface some things which will make him appear less culpable in his brother's opinion. One was the state of their business, into which he had gone carefully, and discovered heavy and steady losses. Some way must be discovered to redeem them. "My mind (as you must know) has always been inclined to y^e^ stage; nay, so strongly, that all my late illness and loss of spirits was owing to the struggle. Finding that both my inclination and my interest required some new way of life, I have chosen y^e^ one most agreeable to myself; and though I fear you will be much displeased at me, yet I hope when you *find that I have y^e^ genius of an actor, you will be reconciled to it.*" As for the wine business, he will send him his share in money,

or settle it in *any way* that he likes. "Last night," he goes on, plunging desperately into the dreadful revelation, "I played *King Richard the Third*, to the surprise of everybody;" and, as an appeal to Peter's business views, "I shall make very nearly £300 per annum by it, and as it is *what I doat upon*, I am resolved to pursue it." Now, the news being out, he stops Peter's protest by business again. "I believe I shall have Bowers's money, and which shall go towards my part of the wine you have at Lichfield. Pray write me an answer immediately." In a sort of post-script, he goes back to the stage. "I have a farce ('Y^e Lying Valet') coming out at Drury Lane." His mind was indeed in a whirl. The splendid success of the night—the blazing footlights—were before his eyes —the roar of applause was in his ears.

That first night was well remembered. There were many who, long after, told how they sat in the boxes or pit and had seen the "great Garrick" play his first play. Among these was Macklin, with whom had been debated the choice of a play for the *début*, and who had approved of the young player's motive for the selection of *Richard*—namely, its suiting his figure so much better than any other. Even this showed a prudence and care not to lose a single point; though on the next morning no one thought of his stature, and he was free to choose what part he would. In truth, he might have reflected that the opening was singularly favourable. The theatres were all in disorder. Quin and Delane were the only actors of note. Quin's stiff, drill-serjeant style of gesture and declamation had grown to be tedious. Macklin's *Shylock* had been but the sensation of a night. Quin's

Richard, *Lear*, and *Macbeth*, were all inferior. If the new actor had "the stuff" in him, now the opportunity favoured him.

The company with whom he was to play was unpretending. Miss Hippisley, "the leading lady," sang fairly in little ballad operas; Peter Bardin, an Irish general "utility" actor; the two Giffards, and Blakes,* were the most conspicuous. It is evidence of the social state of the unhappy players, that they dared not call their house a theatre, but "the *late* theatre." Tickets were to be taken for this momentous night at "The Fleece," a tavern close by, and the best box places were three shillings. As the audience read their bills, they saw that the leading part was to be taken by "a gentleman who had never appeared on *any* stage;" † and it is certain that the news of the coming *début* had been known at all the

* One of these Goodman's Fields actors who played with Garrick was called "Dagger Marr," whom Mr. Taylor had seen in his boyhood. He used to play murderer's parts, and long after forced the present of a turkey on Garrick, which the latter accepted, not to mortify him, though he had plenty of turkeys at Hampton. Marr was asked did Garrick take the present? "Take it!" said the actor, with characteristic meanness, "he would have taken it *had it been a roll and treacle.*"

† A fiction allowed in his profession. One copy of this famous bill has been preserved.

October 19, 1741.

At the Theatre in Goodman's Fields, this day will be performed, *A Concert of Vocal and Instrumental Music*, divided into two parts.

Tickets at three, two, and one shilling.

Places for the Boxes to be taken at the Fleece Tavern, near the Theatre.

N.B. Between the two Parts of the Concert will be presented an Historical Play called the

LIFE AND DEATH OF

KING RICHARD THE THIRD.

Containing the distresses of K. Henry 6th.
The artful acquisition of the Crown by King Richard.
The Murder of Young King Edward 5th, and his Brother in the Tower.
The landing of the Earl of Richmond.
And the Death of King Richard in the memorable Battle of Bosworth Field,

coffee-houses, and drew a strong muster of his private friends. Otherwise the house was not crowded. Indeed, there had been so many first appearances of incapable amateurs who had failed outrageously, that this announcement was more likely to repel than attract. The playhouse itself presented a handsome show. In an oval over the stage was a sort of apotheosis of the King, attended by Peace, Liberty, and Justice, and "trampling Oppression" under foot—the popular attitude for "peaceful" monarchy. Round the ceiling were four medallions of Shakspeare, Dryden, Congreve, with Betterton, alone selected to be put in company with the famous dramatists. The "plafond" was gaily painted with scenes from famous plays—Cato, on the left, pointing to the body of his dead son, Marcius; in the centre, "Cæsar stabbed in the Senate-house," a subject in keeping with the play of "Charles the First," which had so offended the

being the last that was fought between the Houses of York and Lancaster; with many other true Historical Passages.

THE Part of King Richard by A GENTLEMAN
(Who never appeared on any Stage).

King Henry, by Mr. Giffard: Richmond, Mr. Marshall; Prince Edward, by Miss Hippisley; Duke of York, Miss Naylor; Duke of Buckingham, Mr. Paterson; Duke of Norfolk, Mr. Blakes; Lord Stanley, Mr. Pagett; Oxford, Mr. Vaughan; Tressel, Mr. W. Giffard; Catesby, Mr. Marr; Ratcliff, Mrs. Crofts; Blount, Mr. Naylor; Tyrrel, Mr. Puttenham; Lord Mayor, Mr. Dunstall; the Queen, Mrs. Steel; Duchess of York, Mrs. Yates; and the part of Lady Anne, by Mrs. Giffard.

WITH
Entertainments of Dancing,
By Mons. Fromet, Madame Duvalt, and the Two Masters and Miss Granier.

To which will be added a Ballad Opera of One Act, called

THE VIRGIN UNMASK'D.

The Part of Lucy by Miss Hippisley.
Both of which will be performed Gratis by Persons for this Diversion.
The Concert will commence exactly at six o'clock.

"sober persons." On the right was the parting of Mark Antony and Octavia; and on "the sounding board over the stage"—a part of the decoration that comes on us with surprise—was seen Apollo and the Nine Muses. Such was the interior of the theatre, which we are told was looked on as "a neat and elegant piece of workmanship;" "well-warmed," and to this plafond must the fine eyes of Garrick have often wandered.

On that Monday night the performance began at six o'clock, with a few pieces of music. Then the curtain rose on "The Life and Death of King Richard the Third;" and after the first scene, at that nervous moment, the new actor came from the wing. It was acted, of course, according to old Cibber's clever arrangement of the play.

Macklin, though quarrelling with Garrick later, always talked fondly of this glorious night—the delight he felt, the amazing surprise and wonder at the daring novelty of the whole, and yet, at the same time, the universal conviction of the audience that it was right. There, too, sat Taylor, an oculist, who long remembered the astonishment at his simple and easy action; so different from the solemn mouthings,—the buckram and sawings which was the old fashion. And there, too, was sitting "Gentleman Smith," the airy actor, who had a university education, and went to Newmarket every year, and could boast that he had never blacked his face or gone down a trap. It was indeed a night to be well noted, not for the actor's sake merely, but for the great revolution it brought round in the stage.

It was recollected, however, long afterwards that when he came upon the scene and saw the crowded

house, he was disconcerted, and remained a few seconds without being able to go on. But he recovered himself. No wonder it surprised that audience. It was so new—and was all new. They found themselves in a fresh dramatic world, and were at first mystified, and scarcely knew whether they were to sanction this daring violation of all the old sacred rules. What astonished them was the absence of the "plain chaunt," or sing-song, the dead level declamation, now rising, now falling, either dry, hoarse, and croaking or ear-piercing and "sow-gelder"—to use Chetwood's quaint word. This was free and natural. The surprising novelty was remarked, "that he seemed to identify himself with the part." They were amazed at his wonderful power of feature. The stupendous passions of *Richard* were seen in his face before he spoke, and outstripped his words. There was a perpetual change and vivacity. One effect at last overbore all hesitation, and the delighted audience found relief for their emotions in rapturous shouts of applause. It was when he flung away the Prayer Book, after dismissing the deputation,—a simple and most natural action, yet marked with originality, —and then the audience first seemed to discover this was true genius that was before them. Quin would have stalked and mouthed and "paved" a whole half-hour to express all that that graphic motion conveyed. When he came to the later defiant and martial phase of the character, he took the audience with him in a tempest of enthusiasm.

"What do they in the North,"

was given with such electric enthusiasm and savage-

ness, as to cause a thrill to flutter round the hearers, and when he came to the effective clap-trap, "Off with his head," &c., his "visible enjoyment of the incident"* was so marked, that the audience burst into loud shouts of delight and approbation. What a night of delight to look back to! Yet upon reaching this point of the play, his vigour and animation had been so excessive that his voice began to fail him at the most critical part. He felt himself growing hoarser every moment, and would have been overpowered but for the seasonable relief of a Seville orange. Mr. Dryden Leach, the printer, used often to boast how he had thus indirectly contributed to the success of "the great Garrick."

There were no official "critiques" in the daily papers which set out elaborately the details of the acting. Journals were too small, and all space was economized strictly for *news;* yet, under such conditions, the meagre notice to be read next morning in the "Daily Post" becomes very significant. For its extent it is almost enthusiastic. "Last night," said the "Daily Post," "was performed *gratis* the tragedy of 'King Richard the Third' at the late theatre in Goodman's Fields, when the character of *Richard* was performed by a gentleman who never appeared before, *whose reception was the most extraordinary and great that was ever known on such an occasion.* We hear he obliges the town this evening with the same performance." Another criticism, which is a little later in date, speaks of him as he appeared at this time. It remarked his nice proportions, and that his voice was clear and piercing, perfectly sweet and harmonious, without mono-

* Davies' singular phrase.

tony, drawling or affectation: it was "neither whining, bellowing, nor grumbling, but perfectly easy in its transitions, natural in its cadence, and beautiful in its elocution. He is not less happy in his mien and gait, in which he is neither strutting nor mincing, neither stiff nor slouching. When three or four are on the stage with him, he is attentive to whatever is spoke, *and never drops his character when he has finished a speech,* by either looking contemptuously on an *inferior performer, unnecessary spitting, or suffering his eyes to wander through the whole circle of spectators.* His action is never superfluous, awkward, or too *frequently repeated,* but graceful, decent, and becoming."* This is worth quoting, even as showing the state in which the new actor found the stage.

The cloak of mystery as to the name was kept up for some time. For the next three nights the play was repeated; the part of *Richard* by a "gentleman who had never appeared but twice or thrice." On the twenty-third he played his Ipswich part of *Aboan* with Yates, and with the same success. For these first seven nights the success was more with the audience than with the town, and the receipts were but an average of thirty pounds a night. But then the theatre was a tiny one. He was receiving but a guinea a night. Curiosity was only just beginning to be aroused, and the procession of carriages had not yet set out from the West End.

On the 28th, "Love Makes a Man" was given with "Don Dismallo;" by the gentleman who performed *King Richard.* Mr. Garrick was not yet

* This critique from "The Champion," is perhaps unique. It is in Mr. Bullock's curious collection of cuttings, MSS., on Garrick's playing.

announced. On the 2nd of November he went back to *Richard*, and on that night, just as he was getting ready to go on, word came that Mr. Pope—then sickly and fast failing—was in the house. He felt his heart palpitating, yet it only inspired him with confidence. As he came from the wing with the usual

"Now is the winter of our discontent," &c.,

he could see a little figure in black, seated in a side-box, whose eyes seemed to shoot through him like lightning. For a moment he was disturbed—he hesitated a little; but anxiety gave place to joy and triumph. The poet, he could see, was regarding him with a serious earnestness. Timidity wore off; the house was presently in a roar of delight, and he saw the great poet applauding heartily. This was indeed an honour; for Pope had given up theatres, but was persuaded to come up by his friend Lord Orrery. He was charmed, and with the old natural prejudice in favour of Betterton, whom he thought unapproachable, he turned to his friend and said, "That young man never had his equal, and never will have a rival." This was reported to Garrick; as was also the poet's apprehension lest "the young man should become vain, and be ruined by applause." But nothing was more unlikely. In every step of his life—from the opening to the end—there was no lightness or rashness, but a careful restraint, and making good his ground as he went along.*

The poet came to see the new actor no less than three times. We may suspect that one visit was on the night of November the 26th, "when a great number

* Garrick described the whole scene himself to Stockdale.

of persons of quality and distinction were at Goodman's Fields, to see 'King Richard,' who all expressed the highest satisfaction at the whole performance. Several hundred persons were obliged to return for want of room, the house being full soon after five o'clock." The following night came his own farce of "Lethe," while Miss Hippisley gave a song called "The Life of a Belle." Then followed the "Orphan," with "the gentleman who played *Richard*" in "Chamont;" then a long interval during which "Pamela," in which he played *Jack Smatter*, had a sort of run.

Now that the worst was over, and the terrible news broken to Lichfield, it is curious to see the undercurrent of exultation, in his future letters. Peter "Garwick," now that the step was irretrievable, had found his account in a sort of aggrieved and touchy tone, which his brother, by the most gentle and earnest appeals, strove to *adoucir*. Yet with what impatience must he have received Brother Peter's jeremiad from Lichfield. They were all dreadfully shocked. They were overwhelmed, and the two sisters who lived with Peter still took it seriously to heart. *He* is not to be brought over. David, in the flush of his triumph, has once more to take up his pen and patiently go over the old grounds. On the morning after that first night of triumph, he had also to sit down and break the news to other relations, through the medium of Mr. Peter Fermignac. He had not courage to approach them directly. These were the La Condés, who lived at Carshalton, merchants of importance, and people, no doubt, of the "strictest" principles; and on that very day Mr. Fermignac addresses himself very ruefully

to the dreadful business. "Dear Madam," writes that gentleman, on Tuesday, October 20th, "enclosed is a copy of a letter sent me from David Garric, who played *Crook'dback Richard*, and does it again to-night at Goodman's Fields." Nothing could be more blunt or significant—and then he goes on with "*The Letter*," which is very much a repetition of the one sent to Peter Garrick — the excuse of no profit coming in from the wine business, and "the terrible prospect of all his fortune running out." Had he been the most prosperous merchant in town, we may suspect thoughts and wishes would have been turning to the same darling purpose. What gave him true concern was, lest his friends—especially the chief of them—those at Carshalton, should be very cool upon him. "But what can I do?" he pleads. He was wholly bent on the thing. He was sure to make £300 a-year. He designed to throw off the wine business—and would Mr. Fermignac break the matter to his uncle? The stage-door would be always open to him—indeed, any part of the house—a privilege which Mr. Fermignac thought poorly of; for he says, in the same dismal way, "This is his letter, which I leave you to consider of, *and am very sorry for the contents*, but thought it best to communicate them to you, and am your dutiful," &c.

On receipt of which, this important uncle wrote down angrily to Lichfield, blaming Peter for concealing the state of this affair from him. In this way *he* was accountable for the fatal disgrace that had been brought on them all. As for the stage, he said, it was a degrading place, and players a low race, contemned by all. All of which Peter reports, and duly inflamed.

Again; in reply, David appeals to his brother patiently and argumentatively. Resignedly he accepts the notice of opposition; goes again over what he had argued before. As for this uncle's displeasure, it was no fault of Peter's, but all *his*, David's, wilfulness—as they had no very great failures in trade, and the wine business *was* certainly succeeding a little. But run out he was, and let him live ever so warily, must run out still more. And, indeed, let Peter reflect on this a little seriously. Could he, David, ever hope to make enough to maintain himself and a servant handsomely? "As for the stage, I know, in the general, it deserves your censure;" but he should consider how handsomely some players have lived. Look at Wilks, Booth, and Cibber, who were admitted into and admired by the best company—and as to his genius in that way ("by y^e best judges thought wonderful!"), there was not merely his own inclination, but even friends, who were averse before, now thought it impossible for him to keep off the stage. Then he tries to dazzle Peter with an array of gentility—the attentions, favours and praises that are heaped upon him. He has enjoyed more civilities from "the Best in Town" since his playing, than he ever received before in the whole of his life. In short, it would be too vain to repeat all he had heard, even to a brother. But, secure in his position of being "aggrieved," the other is still obdurate. These gentle remonstrances are only homage to *his* influence and judgment. He writes back to protest, warn, discourage. He knew whose doing it was. That Giffard, the player, had entrapped him, had got money out of him. He, Peter, could never agree. Some remonstrance—nay, some solemn

Margaret Woffington

warning, was indeed a duty in a relation on what might have been a fatal step; but he must, indeed, have been a dull fellow not to have seen that the young man's purpose—for all his pleading for permission—was utterly unchangeable.*

Weeks go by, and Peter, down at Lichfield, remains discontented, and his brother, with the sweetness and patience which such triumphant success would soon have dispelled in another, still soothes and reasons with him. As to Giffard, thirty pounds was all he had ever lent that actor, and that had been repaid long since. His benefit was now coming on, for which he had been offered one hundred and twenty guineas on mere speculation, on which occasion "Pit and Boxes would be put together"—a piece of playhouse language which would have jarred on them at Lichfield—and be charged the same price. All his friends would rally round him—friends *who continue so*—though his dear brother is not to be brought over. If Peter would only come up for that great night, *he* would take care of him at his own lodgings. Everything was going on happily; he has even reason to know that the important uncle will be reconciled to him; "*for even the merchants say I will be an honour to him.*" Peter writes back, a little softened, that though he never can approve of the stage, he is still David's affectionate brother—a handsome and gracious concession, very gratefully received by the other. But he was still aggrieved. David's step must hurt him in his business—though, as we have seen, that business was "hurt" sufficiently before the step was taken. *That* retort, however, was

* Forster MSS.

not to come from David. "If you want money," he said, "you shall have all I have;" and, indeed, by playing and writing, he thought he was more likely to help his brother in that way. He has money now, and will be able to buy two hundred pounds' worth of the wine stock; and if Peter wants more than his proper share, he can send him supplies. Giffard had given him twenty guineas for a single ticket—(there was something to dazzle the heavy soul of Peter!). At their little theatre they were doing finer business than even at the two great houses of Drury Lane and Covent Garden. Fleetwood had come to him with great offers; so, after all this, may he venture to tell his brother that he *is very nearly quite* resolved to be a player? Peter had nothing to urge in reply: "grumbling," as well as argument, had been exhausted. But there was one dreadful matter that should be cleared up. An awful rumour had got down to Lichfield. *Had his brother been really playing Harlequin, before he came out at Goodman's Fields?* David replies that he had never done so. On one night, indeed, in the last season, when Yates was ill, as has been already described, he had gone on for a scene.

It was now Christmas. The farce by the new actor had come out at Goodman's Fields—not at Drury Lane as was originally proposed. This was "The Lying Valet," with Garrick himself in the part of *Sharp*. It was thought, said its author, the most diverting farce ever performed. A general roar from beginning to end! He has now got courage to send it down to Lichfield.

His industry and versatility were no less remarkable. They were as yet not able to determine, he

told his brother, whether he was best in tragedy or comedy. In settling this point he certainly fell into mistakes; for he imperilled his reputation by taking up such flimsy parts as *Jack Smatter* in "Pamela," and *Clody* in the "Fop's Fortune." Very soon he took friends' advice, and gave up the practice. But he was privately studying *Othello* and *Bayes*, from which Giffard had great hopes.

On December 2nd, the night of his benefit, the veil was at last raised, and it was announced that "the gentleman who played *King Richard*" was Mr. Garrick, who would now appear in "The Fair Penitent," to be given *gratis*. Tickets were to be had at the Bedford Coffee-house, Tom's in Cornhill, Cary's in the Minories, at the Fleece, and at Mr. Garrick's lodgings in Mansfield-street, Goodman's Fields. "The stage will be built as after the manner of an amphitheatre, where servants will be allowed to keep places, and likewise in the front boxes, but not in the pit." A seat in either pit or box was four shillings, equal to about seven in our time;* and the gallery was one and sixpence. The servants were required to be there by three o'clock!

Already he had fast friends, who revelled and triumphed in his triumph. Among these was one who was proud to call himself his "friend, countryman, and servant"—Newton, the future bishop—and who was now a tutor in Lord Carpenter's family. This clergyman was charmed even to enthusiasm with his friend's genius. He encouraged him, and bade him make no excuses for adopting such a profession; for

* They had raised the prices a shilling.

long before, he had always believed "he was a born actor, if ever man was so." And he confidently made a prophecy, which came true in a more remarkable degree than he could have anticipated, that this taking to the stage would not hurt his character, but would make his fortune. This was bold in the case of artists who but half a dozen years before were being taken up under magistrates' warrants, and were with difficulty making a livelihood, by their wits. And to the young man, a little nervous lest his aristocratic friends should think meanly of him for taking such a step, this friendly clergyman gave—a little awkwardly, perhaps—some kindly comfort, assuring him "that an excellent actor, if he is at the same time an honest, worthy man, is a fit companion for anybody. Was not Roscius intimate with Cicero, and Betterton with Sprat and Atterbury, and other divines, not as a mimic and buffoon, to make diversion for the company, but as an agreeable friend and companion?" The clergyman went again and again, and made the dining-room at Grosvenor Square ring again with praises and raptures over his friend. He was never tired of going to see him. He was struck with the wonderful workings of his face—though they found it hard at first to get a satisfactory view, as the stage was so over-crowded with spectators, whose heads were in the way. Thus he made Mr. Garrick secure places for them, at one time the stage-box, "where we may see your looks in the scene with *Lady Anne*, and as you lie on the couch: that is, that we may sit, with the stage on our right hand and the pit on our left." So particular and eager was the clergyman. The lord and his family only

smiled at their tutor's extravagance; but when they went, became fully as rapturous, declaring they had never seen the like before, and that it passed all expectation. Presently they were making up distinguished parties to go from Grosvenor Square to Goodman's Fields. But a yet more marked compliment was the great Mrs. Porter, the retired actress, coming up to town specially and fixing to go with them. She was charmed. She said the youth was a born actor, and knew more at his first appearance than others after twenty years' training. "Good God!" added she, as they were talking it over at the Carpenters', "what will he be in time?" Some one then said that he thought his *Lord Foppington* was inferior; on which the old actress quickly took him up, saying it was impossible for young Garrick to do anything ill, and that he might excel *less* in that; but excel he must in everything. All this was most encouraging and delightful.*

Towards Christmas, Newton sent him eager news that Pulteney, then in the thick of politics, was anxious to hear him in "The Orphan," and "The Lying Valet," and had begged that some night might be fixed in good time. The clergyman seemed a little awestruck at this honour. There should be "a front box," specially secured, as being most commodious. But the young actor was careless, or perhaps did not hold the matter to be of such importance as did Lord Carpenter's tutor. It came to the end of

* Dr. Young, of the "Night Thoughts," who was born in 1681, had seen Betterton, and pronounced Garrick, contemptuously, "only a boy to him." Lord Cobham, however, who had also seen the great actor, thought Garrick not inferior.

January, and the "Orphan" had not been played. Now Parliament was meeting, and there was an election petition to be heard at the bar; and it was impossible for Mr. Pulteney to come on the next night. So the box need not be kept. A lady of consequence, too, had disappointed. It was, in fact, most probable that Mr. Pulteney might not be able to come at all. The tutor writes in rather an *aigre* tone, and it is evident had engaged his influence to the statesman to "command" the play from his fellow-townsman. "It would certainly have been a great honour to you, *if of no other* advantage, for such a person as Mr. Pulteney to come so far to be one of your audience; and if I had been in your capacity, I should have thought it worth while to have strained a point, *or done almost anything* rather than have disappointed him. I would have acted that night, if I had spared myself all the rest for it." Lord Bath was to be, later, one of the warmest friends of Mrs. Garrick, and some of the most charming letters that an old gallant could write, were addressed by him to her. The tutor was naturally anxious about a patron, whose interest was later to make him a bishop.

In a few weeks later, Mr. Pulteney was heard asking Mrs. Deanes, one of the Carpenter family, "when were we to go to Goodman's Fields?" and the party was actually made up, and appointed for the third night of "Lear," which, as will be seen, was properly its first night. It was a long journey from Grosvenor Square, nearly four miles. They went in "Mrs. Deanes' coach," and Lord Carpenter's footman was sent on early to keep places. All this, more than a hundred

years ago, reads like making up a party to go to the play during the present week. Yet from all omission of Mr. Pulteney's opinion and approbation, in a letter written after the performance, it may be doubted if the statesman *did* go after all.*

The new actor, indeed, must have been overwhelmed with the brilliancy of his own success. He would have been more than mortal could he have withdrawn himself from the splendid homage that was paid to his talents. Mr. Glover, of Leonidas fame, was to be seen in the boxes every night, and protested there had not been such acting "for ten years"—a period he might have put further back very safely. Mr. Lyttleton, the Prince's favourite, was his friend, and held out hopes of the Prince himself coming. Others joined in these compliments. "Mr. Pit" said he was the only actor in England. Presently the elegant Murray, whose leading of the dusty ranks of the Bar did not interfere with elegant amusements, was to have him at supper at Lincoln's Inn Fields. He was soon to dine with Lord Halifax, then with Lord Sandwich, and again with Lord Halifax, to meet Lord Chesterfield.

Mr. Hawkins Brown, who wrote the pleasant burlesque of "The Pipe of Tobacco," was his friend: With perfect truth might he write that, "No actor had ever been so caressed;" and with yet more truth might he remind his brother that, his "*private character* made them even more desirous of his company."†

* Mrs. Deanes was a remarkable person in her way, being the widow of the poet Rowe.

† Garrick used to tell how, at this triumphant season, when his company was sought by all the town, he had been brought by a friend to the House of old Speaker Onslow, whom his friend was most anxious should hear him. The Speaker did not care much for plays, and when told that the young actor

23608

These "civilities" were wonderful; but he was all the while reaping more substantial benefits than dinners with lords, or suppers with wits. The modest three hundred a-year to which he looked forward was already expanding: Giffard had now associated him with himself, in the management of the house, and was sharing the profits with him. It was scarcely unreasonable that he should wish to have his pittance of a guinea a night raised.* But the "rush" had not as yet come. Presently word went forth at the other side of town that the new actor was to be "the fashion." Ladies of quality were presently to pronounce his name, and the spell began to work. Not yet, however, were "the dozen dukes" to be seen in the boxes, one of whom, the Duke of Argyle, was to declare him superior to Betterton. The town was growing "horn mad after him;" though it was certainly strange that two men of the caste and gifts of Walpole and Gray should affect to "see nothing" in him. That such a surprising success should have raised up enemies, was only natural. One report was

had been induced to stand up and favour the company with his great dagger scene in "Macbeth," he bowed assent. But at the pause—one of the grand "points" which preceded the speech—the old man's voice was heard, "Pray, sir, was you at the turnpike meeting at Epsom on Thursday?"—*Cradock.*

* Giffard's son used to tell how, at the end of this first great week he had entered the room, and found Giffard and Garrick in friendly dispute about six guineas, the salary for the first week, and which Garrick generously refused to accept. The money fell on the floor, and there lay: and he carried it off without their perceiving it.—*Lee Lewes.*

"Not that I expect," wrote Macklin, a year or two later, in his violent appeal against Garrick, "you will discover any puncture or throb at your heart except for the further advancement of your own wages: these are indeed a sort of qualms with which the manager will find you continually troubled. You were excessively subject to them whilst you acted with Mr. Giffard at Goodman's Fields, where you were strangely uneasy in your mind, and had odd fits of longing, till at last you had usurped one half of the whole theatre from this generous manager."

diligently sent about, that he had appeared at the masquerades in some unbecoming character; which he took the trouble to contradict by a card in the "London Daily Post." He begged to assure the ladies and gentlemen "who were offended with me without a cause" that he was not at either of the masquerades that season, as could be proved. If any person had a wish to be further satisfied, he was quite willing to do so in person, and in the fullest way.

Old Cibber, a waif and stray of the past, discontented, looked on at these successes sourly. His own son—afterwards to be a bitter enemy of the new actor—was on the stage, and in possession of a good many of Garrick's parts. Though Cibber had true contempt for his son's ability, he affected to consider him superior in *Bayes*. Every one was coming to the old man to sound the new actor's praises, and ask his opinion. No doubt he was told of Pope's admiration. It was not to be expected that one who had seen and known the old school, and was committed by long criticism and years of writing to that school, should very heartily welcome a revolution in principles. He would lose his temper on this subject, and depreciate the actor by shrugs and "pishes," and bitter remarks. Even at Tom's Coffee-house, where he was playing cards one night with an old general, the subject was introduced, and put him out so much, that he revoked. "Have you no diamonds, Mr. Cibber?" "Yes, a million, by G—d," said the other, who swore terribly. "And why not play them, then?" he was asked, pettishly. One of the good-natured by-standers called out maliciously, "Because Garrick would not let him!"

Another night, when Garrick had been playing

Fribble, they were still harping on the same strain. "You should see him," said Cibber to a certain lord; "he is the completest little doll of a figure—the prettiest little creature." "But in other characters," said the lord, "has he not great merit?" He did not answer for a moment. Then suddenly, "What an admirable *Fribble*—such mimicking, ambling, fidgeting! Well, he *must* be a clever fellow to write up to *his own character* so excellently as he has done in this part."*

Once Mrs. Woffington gave him and Arthur Murphy a little dinner, where, as usual, he spoke with great contempt of Garrick. "Come, Colley," said she, "you must confess he is a very clever young man." He owned he was fair enough in *Fribble*, thus always carefully avoiding any praise of his really great parts. Again, he said, his son was much superior in *Bayes*. Murphy then struck in and joined Mrs. Woffington in these praises, and at last got the old critic to admit that Garrick was "a very extraordinary young man."†

Later again, when Fleetwood asked in the green-room when they were to have another comedy from him—"From me!" cried the old man; "but who would take the characters?" "Why, sir," was the answer, "there's Garrick, Macklin, Clive, Pritchard—" "O yes," said Cibber, "I know the list very well; but then, my dear fellow," he said, taking a

* Nothing is more curious than the linking of distant eras by a generation or two. *His* era had stretched back to the days of William the Third, and yet the mother of a gentleman who died not many years since, recollected this veteran perfectly, standing at the parlour window of his house in Berkeley Square at the corner of Bruton Street, "drumming with his fingers on the frame." He seemed to her a calm, grave, and reverend old gentleman.—*Taylor.*

† Davies makes Mrs. Bracegirdle the actress in this story, and describes Cibber taking snuff, and saying, "Faith, Bracey," &c.

pinch of snuff very deliberately, "*where the devil are your actors?*"*

Quin's position, long the established tragedian, and in command of the town, was cruelly affected by the new actor's success. He was at once thrust down and deposed. There was fatal truth in the hypothesis he threw out in his first burst of disgust: "If this young fellow be right, then *we* have been all wrong." He secretly believed that *they* were right, and therefore the "young fellow" was wrong. But, alas! the public were deciding the question rapidly, and without any question of delicacy. Such dethronements have been always carried out with the rudeness of a *coup d'état.* So sudden and mortifying a desertion is always terribly incident to the actor's lot; this was the third time he had experienced this rude shock. On Booth's death he had reigned supreme: when suddenly arose Delane, and Quin found himself deserted. Again, Macklin's success had brought a fresh abandonment. Yet there was a bluff honesty about Quin—and even a dignity—in the way in which he set himself to do battle for his throne; when he found himself fairly beaten, he gave up the struggle, and, for a time at least, retired. He had no animosity to his conqueror, and could later become his warm friend. He had his jests and satirical remarks, the best of which was his calling Garrick "*the Whitfield of the stage.*" With wit and truth, Quin added that the sectary was followed for a time, but they would soon all be coming back to

* Davies tells the story better, making it Garrick who puts the question. But the old man, some time after, in a mixed company, gave him a very happy thrust. Garrick said the old style would not go down now. "How do you know?" replied Cibber; "*you* never tried it."

church again. Garrick was told of his speech, and retorted in smart rhyme—

> "Thou great Infallible forbear to roar,
> Thy bulls and errors are revered no more;
> When doctrines meet with general reprobation,
> It is not heresy, but Reformation." *

Garrick's *Bayes*, which old Cibber so depreciated, was the most important of these successes, but it was scarcely so legitimate a triumph as some of his others. The entire attraction lay in the admirable burlesque imitation of the mannerisms of the ordinary actors of the time. Leading actors are always "mannered," but never were players so dismally monotonous and even regimental in the delivery, through the stiff, inflexible chaunt they were compelled to adopt. As a revolutionist, he felt he must act on the offensive, and his best engine certainly appeared to be ridicule. It was given in February, and the success was unbounded. There he had a field literally illimitable, on which he could revel in versatility, and wit, and humour. From this true comedy had Fielding taken his "Pasquin,"—while later was to come Sheridan with his "Critic," who, with posterity, will have all the honour. Yet Garrick's conception and treatment of the great character was highly shrewd and original, for he saw that he was alone, and comparatively weak. It must

* Quin's jests, "among the most masterly in the language," are well known. Not so familiar are a number that will be found in Mr. Taylor's amusing Memoirs. Cradock gives his sketch of Warburton. "Why," said he, "when he gets to heaven, he will be seen *mounted on the tallest horse there*, and calling out to Paul, 'Hold my stirrup,' and to Peter, 'Bring my whip.'" With which may be compared Churchill's description of the Bishop *walking*—

> "He was so proud that should he meet
> The twelve Apostles in the street,
> He'd turn his nose up at them all,
> *And shove his Saviour from the wall.*"

be owned that this was scarcely a dignified proceeding, and he afterwards regretted it. But the new style of acting he had introduced, brought him enemies. The old actors affected to think he was taking away their bread. Quin, as we have seen, was angry. It was indeed natural they should feel, as the old conservatives of a profession will do to young reformers. Garrick therefore, alone and unsupported, required to defend himself, by every means, and in his *Bayes* gave imitations of some of the pedantic school. The same acute critic of "The Champion" defended him very judiciously. "I cannot omit taking notice that some have been offended at his mimicking the players, on which I shall beg leave to observe, that it was first done at Goodman's Fields to *excite curiosity and serve the proprietor*" . . . He then adds, that Theo. Cibber and "young Green," of Drury Lane, were greatly applauded for the same thing; and, he adds, "I think it his least excellence . . . *for the best and only model is nature, of which Mr. Garrick is as fine a copy, as he is of the players he imitates.*" Certainly as elegant a compliment, as it is an ingenious defence.

He gave Delane, Ryan, and Bridgewater, actors of the old school, who croaked, and mouthed, and "sang" in the true established style. Hale came one night to enjoy the ridicule of his brethren, but was infinitely mortified and humiliated at the exhibition given of himself. On Delane's reputation the effect was serious—the ridicule indeed "killed;" and it became impossible to listen again with gravity to the frantic and lusty "ranting" of his *Alexander*. It was given out that this mortification so preyed on Delane's spirits that "he took to the bottle," and died of excess. This absurd

story is not true, for he lived many years after. Garrick, who deeply regretted having given pain to his brother player, tried to make it up to him in every way, and became his friend, almost ostentatiously, which the other repaid by an unhandsome piece of deceit which Garrick could not forget.

Indeed, the mean and cheap art of mimicry was already an established feature of those days, and much encouraged by audiences. Actors were disloyal enough to "take each other off" on the stage,—even without notice—a proceeding which would draw thunders of applause.* Pit and galleries are always ready to laugh; but it is a disloyal and unworthy act for one of a profession to purchase that cheap approbation at the expense of a brother of their profession. A genius like Foote, and a creature like Tate Wilkinson, afterwards found their account and profit in this undignified *rôle*, and it is one of the most entertaining instances of social retribution to see how furiously the greater mimic resented the liberty taken with him in the same trade by the small imitator.

One of the green-room stories runs that Garrick had told Giffard that he must just glance at him, to support a show of impartiality. The other assented, but was so enraged by the ridiculous portrait given of him, even at rehearsal, that he sent his friend a challenge. They met the following morning, and it is said that Garrick received a slight wound, which caused the play to be

* In "Rule a Wife," where Wilks, as the *Copper Captain*, drew back timorously from *Estifania*, and asked,—

"What! thine own husband?"

Mrs. Oldfield brought down a tumult of applause by the fashion in which she, in her reply, exactly mimicked the tone of his voice.

put off a fortnight, "owing to the indisposition of a principal performer." Cooke is the only authority for this story, and it would seem to be refuted by the appearance of Garrick's name in the bills nearly every night of the fortnight, during which the play was put off. He was not, therefore, the "principal performer" alluded to. Still we should be almost inclined to accept it as true, in its broad outline. Cooke, who reports it, was a theatrical critic, knew all the chief theatres, and most of his stories have some foundation. Garrick and Giffard were both sons of gentlemen, and would not be reluctant to resort to the popular arbitration of their caste. They had already had a coolness, as to the profits of the theatre. And, finally, the play having certainly been put off, it may have been Giffard that was wounded.* It is infinitely to Garrick's honour that when some time later the actors came and remonstrated with him on the injury he was doing to their reputation and prospects, he at once gave up his imitations, and never resumed them, though he must have known he was sacrificing the chief attraction of the piece.†

On one of these nights, his friend Johnson, with another Lichfieldian, Dr. Taylor, were among the audience, and afterwards adjourned to a tavern with Garrick, and Giffard the manager, to talk the play over. Johnson, perhaps not in the best of humours,

* The mimicries that offended did not take place at rehearsal, but must have occurred at the performance, for the play was played once or twice before it was suspended. Cooke speaks very confidently of the duel, "which none but the parties and their seconds knew, at the time, *and very few ever since.*"

† "For once in his life did a generous action," said the ungrateful Tate Wilkinson; who, with a stupidity equal to his ingratitude, chronicles innumerable instances of Mr. Garrick's kindness and generosity to him.

and never very tolerant of his friend's success, began to find fault with his emphasis in various lines, and then said, "The players, sir, have got a kind of rant with which they run on, without any regard either to accent or emphasis." Giffard and Garrick, a little offended at this ungraciousness, tried hard to confute him. Johnson offered to give them a test, and asked them to repeat the Commandment, "Thou shalt not bear false witness," &c. Both were said to have put the emphasis wrong; and Johnson with infinite glee set them right, and showed himself superior to the players.

Taking the advice of his friend Newton,—he was always grateful for useful advice, and took it always,—he was now gradually falling out of the more undignified round of characters, such as *Jack Smatter*, *Clodio*, in "The Fop of Fortune," and even the *Ghost* in "Hamlet," which was scarcely of importance enough for his powers. He was secretly thinking of a grander character, later to prove perhaps his finest tragic conception. He was privately studying *King Lear*. Wise beyond his years, he took no serious step without consideration. Macklin and the jovial physician, Barrowby, were taken into council. There were many discussions at the Bedford, and the advice they offered was, that he should consult his own powers, and if he felt confident in the matter, should by all means attempt it.

On the 11th of March, 1742, he came forward in this character. The two friends were in the pit, charged to criticise jealously; but though it was well received by the audience, they were not at all satisfied. They told him frankly that he had scarcely caught the

spirit of old age, and was too young; he did not show enough infirmity. He seemed to want dignity in the prison scene, though as far as dress went he looked the part excellently. In the famous curse, where he afterwards made such a "point," he began too low, and ended too high. Macklin after described this scene;—the young actor sitting, pencil in hand, and carefully noting those remarks; at the end he thanked them, and said he would not play the character again, until he had thoroughly reconsidered and studied it. The play, however, had been already announced for the next week. He performed it again, and Macklin said not nearly so well as on the first occasion. It was played half a dozen times, then laid aside for nearly three weeks.

He would not allow his two critical friends to see his next rehearsal, as he said their objections only constrained him in the playing. It was played again towards the end of April. Newton, his fellow-townsman, was present at this revised performance, and was enraptured. A master of Westminster School, and a chief clerk in the Treasury—good judges—who had seen Betterton and Booth, placed him far above the latter, and almost equal to the former. It was remarked that he was now completely the old man, and represented the infirmities of one who had passed fourscore years. It must have been a fine performance; quite new to the audience; full of tides of passion, grief, despair, rage, and fury, and a pathetic hopelessness and abandonment. What struck the clergyman was the complete change from the power and fury of *Richard.* He had now seen the young actor in four parts—*Richard, Chamont, Bayes,* and *Lear*, and he

earnestly declared nothing could be conceived more distinct than each. They were four different persons. For here was the mistake in the old actors. In passion, there was a sort of heroic standard, carried out in all characters, just as the Greeks put on their tragic mask, or as the English actors donned the tall plume of feathers for all staid and solemn characters. Cibber's *Wolsey,* Newton said, and his *Iago,* all smelt strong of his *Lord Foppington;* and Booth's rage of *Hotspur* was the same as that of his *Lear.* It was truly wonderful how a youth of five-and-twenty should have such force, such a weight of manly passion, and affecting pathos. The alternations from fierce, wild, anger and despair, to the most heartrending grief, kept the audience in a tumult of continuous passions. At times the performance was interrupted by open sobs and weeping.* "In short, sir," said Macklin, when he had become his bitter enemy, "the little dog made a *chef d'œuvre* of it;" and a *chef d'œuvre* it continued to the end of his life.

Now the family, giving over opposition, begin to find some profit in their relative's success. Peter has a sum to make out for the stock of wine, and David generously bids him draw on him, who will take it up when due, and Peter shall repay it at his convenience. Peter, too, could so far recognise the stage as to complain, in the name of a Mrs. Brown, who had taken places at Goodman's Fields, and had been refused admission. This was her own mistake, as David takes the trouble to show him. Her servant had taken the places in a Mrs. Dalton's name, and hence

* Davies.

the confusion. "Blunders of footmen," says David, taking a tone which he always afterwards maintained to his family, "make the unthinking part of the world angry, when they should not." * Now, too, of a sudden, Peter is aggrieved once more, at not hearing enough of David's affairs. He says that there is "Billy," another brother, "who is willing to know and take interest in them." David replies that "he is pained to see him warm upon trifles, and suspicious without foundation." Already the family were looking to him to provide for them suitably, out of the profession they so despised; and brother George, now about nineteen, was sent up from Lichfield, and by his brother's influence established in an office—Mr. Patterson, a solicitor, being persuaded to dismiss a clerk in order to make room for him. Through his whole life, indeed, this pair, with George's "long" family of children, were to be an everlasting charge on him. For George himself he had to find places and pay off debts; for Peter he had to weary noble friends for offices and "berths."

At last, by the end of May, Goodman's Fields season ended. Never had there been so industrious a performer. From his first appearance in October, to the closing of the theatre he had played nearly every night—certainly five nights in the week. It was, indeed, a laborious time. We can count up at least a hundred and fifty performances, and what was more laborious still, he studied and acted over nineteen characters. There were *Richard, Lear, Pierre, Chamont, Aboan,* and the *Ghost* in "Hamlet"; *Bayes,*

* Forster's MSS.

Lord Foppington, Witwould, Fondlewife, Jack Smatter, Clodio, Lothario, Duretête, Captain Brazen, Sharp, and *Master Johnny the Schoolboy.* He also played in his own farce of "Lethe," taking no less than three characters.* Here was a varied round of passions, feelings, wit, gaiety, broad humour, eccentricity, fun, light comedy, and the deepest tragedy. Looking over these parts, it seems like looking at one changing his face. Most of them were mere experiments. *Brazen* he played but once, and he thus seems to have tried nearly every character in that play: *Kite*, when he was a boy, and *Plume* later, in Dublin. *Foppington* he gave but three times; *Aboan* three times; *Witwould* four times; *Pierre* four times; *Duretête* once. *King Richard*, however, was played no less than seventeen times, and *Bayes* eighteen. Thus his attraction in the great tragedy and the great comedy were very nearly balanced. His next most popular part was in his "Valet" part, *Sharp*, which he repeated—often after a heavy tragedy—no less than sixteen times. Such parts as *Jack Smatter* and *Master Johnny* were unworthy of him; but they were very popular, as was also *Fondlewife* and *Clody.* Of this series, *Bayes* seems to have "drawn" the best; for though it was played about the same number of times as *Richard*, something must be taken off to allow for the curiosity and "rage" to see the new player.

On the 24th, the playhouse had been obliged to close its doors, not without some pressure of the old persecution. It was only natural, indeed, that the

* Davies seems to forget that this farce had been already brought out at Drury Lane.

managers of Drury Lane and Covent Garden, finding their houses growing "thinner" every day, and the gaudy stream of the nobility's chairs and carriages struggling through the narrow streets of the city, should think of any instruments of suppression furnished them by Act of Parliament. Sir John Barnard, the old enemy of the players, was ready to aid. Lawyers had by this time discovered a check for the trick of playing a tragedy gratis, and taking admission-money for hearing a few tunes played before it. Against such odds it became evident that the little theatre could not maintain a struggle. Fleetwood, embarrassed as he was, could dictate his own terms. It was agreed that Garrick should engage at Drury Lane for the new season at £560 a year.* This was the highest sum ever previously given to an actor, though Quin had nominally been receiving £500 from Fleetwood. With that loyalty to his friends, which was always his characteristic, he made it a stipulation that his friend Giffard should be engaged by Fleetwood. But the manager broke his engagement.† He also came to Drury Lane for three nights, playing *Bayes, Lear,* and *Richard,* to crowded houses. This Fleetwood had also required, to whom it was a welcome assistance. Such was a cruel oppression of Giffard, who now, after this brilliant opening, was only beginning to reap the profits of his spirited outlay. He had given infinite satisfaction by the regularity and perfect propriety of his management, the almost classical choice of his

* "The Gentleman's Magazine." Murphy says £500.

† Murphy and Davies. Geneste—that most accurate and painstaking historian of the Play Bills—said they were mistaken in this, as Giffard was engaged at Covent Garden. But he should have looked through the pamphlets that passed between Macklin and Garrick.

pieces,* and the elegant care with which they were mounted.†

So ended this famous season, which gave to the English players a name without which their order would be in a poor way indeed. But even after that seven months' hard work, he would not allow himself to rest. He had received a pressing invitation to appear in the Irish capital, on most favourable terms, and this he accepted.‡ He was to have no holiday. He had hardly a week to make his preparations; and in the first week of June was in his chaise with Margaret Woffington and Signora Barberini—a dancer—posting down to Park Gate. The journey to Ireland was then tedious, uncertain, and even dangerous, and would take nearly a week. His success had gone on before him; and he was certain of a brilliant welcome.

* Curll. Garrick actually played on Christmas day!

† He reopened the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre, after the season of 1747-8 but failed. He retired to Bath, having made enough money to purchase the estate on which part of Coventry Court, in the Haymarket, now stands. A lady who was living at Bath in 1823, recollected him and his wife.

‡ Davies says, "a deputation was sent from Ireland," which is only his loose way of expressing that Duval, the manager's agent, had waited on him.

CHAPTER IV.

FIRST DUBLIN SEASON.

1742.

DUBLIN, at the time when young Garrick arrived, was a city of many fascinations. As we now look back to its king and queen, its court and courtiers, its lords and ladies, who lived then in fine houses, where are now the meanest slums of the city—to its music, its dancing and revels, it seems to resemble some of those delightful little German courts where an Elector or a Grand Duke reigned; and where travellers on the grand tour, like Wraxall, Nugent, or Doctor Moore, halted their chaise for weeks. There was a constant stream pouring in, of all that was titled, witty, or gifted, and everything that added to the charms of society, or to the attractions of the ball concert-room, or stage, was irresistibly drawn to the Irish capital. Wealthy English dukes and earls, holding court at the Castle, with ministers, privy councillors, chaplains, body guards, pages, musicians, and nearly all the incidents of royalty, were glad to ask over their titled friends and connexions, whose presence added to the attraction. No wonder that under such encouragement that surprising Irish stage should have flourished, and have furnished the British drama with a roll of names unsurpassed in any age or country.

Wonderful Irish stage! The roll is indeed splendid.

We can go back to Wilks, the chief comedian of his day, who made his name as *Sir Harry Wildair*, in his countryman Farquhar's play, and to Doggett, whose badge is still rowed for by the London watermen. It can count Delane and Ryan,—Quin, Mossop, Barry, Sheridan, Macklin, and Henderson; a marvellous sestett of genius. Smaller names, to carry on the succession, are Moody, Sparks, and O'Brien; and coming near our own time, George Frederick Cooke, Macready, and Kean, seem to exhaust the talent of the country. Nor is the female roll less strong in famous names: Clive, Margaret Woffington, and George-Anne Bellamy are a gifted trio; and the succession is kept up by names like Miss Farren, Miss Walstein, Mrs. Glover, Miss Forde, Mrs. Fitzhenry, Mrs. Jordan, and Miss O'Neil. And the writers who furnished these great players with dramas in which to show their talent, was not less remarkable—Farquhar, Southerne, Brocke, Macklin, Sheridan, Kane O'Hara, Sheridan Knowles, O'Keeffe, and Bickerstaff—with the half-Irish Steele, and Congreve.

The taste for music at that time was far in advance of the age—and as eager, as it is to this hour, in that city. Even now, when the Italian opera opens, there is festival time. The galleries fill to suffocation. Verdi and Gounod and Beethoven are listened to with delight, and applauded by unwashed hands, and the *prima donna* is drawn home to her hotel in a crowd of torches. There was then a Philharmonic Society, a Royal Academy of Music, long before the London institution was dreamed of—a New Music Hall in Fishamble Street, another in Crow Street. A pretty bit of homage was paid to St. Cecilia's day, when all

went up in state to the Cathedral, and a great old organ there, with a large orchestra, led by Dubourg, pupil to the famous Geminiani, played anthems and cantatas of Handel, Dr. Arne, and the severe Corelli. And just before Garrick arrived, Mr. Handel, with his "Messiah," was drawing the whole tide of fashion to the New Music Hall, and causing a frantic *furore* for oratorio music, such as has never since been equalled.

In Aungier Street, not very far behind the Castle, was the Theatre Royal, where the charming Mrs. Cibber had drawn audiences and admirers, received such tokens as made her write afterwards to Garrick that "her love to Ireland was as great as his could be, and she always thought with respect and gratitude of the favours she received there." There was the new Theatre, in Smock Alley (a racy and significant name), built but half-a-dozen years before—the manager of which, Du Val, had engaged Garrick.

Smock Alley was a miserable little lane, close to the river, and wide enough for only one carriage to pass. A fragment of the old theatre is still shown, forming part of the wall of a Catholic chapel; but there are plenty of ancient houses lining the alley, old as the old theatre, as may be seen from the stone "jams" of the windows—whose tenants were kept awake by the block and entanglement of carriages getting away through the "Blind Key," and by the shouts of the "footmen with flambeaux," calling up chairs.

Just half a street away, was another theatre—Fishamble Street—in which, up to a few months ago, plays were still acted. It is certainly the oldest House in the kingdom, was of good proportions, and has still its old crush saloon, with faded painting,

where the audience gathered, and waited for their chairs and coaches.*

With Handel, at his Abbey Street lodgings, heaped with money and honours; with Quin and the fascinating Cibber having barely left the Theatre Royal, after drawing great houses, it did seem to be an inappropriate time for a new attraction. But the manager had not miscalculated. On Monday, the 3rd of June, 1741, had been given the final performance of the "Messiah." On Saturday, the 12th, the approaching arrival was considered of such importance, that a paragraph was seen in the papers that Mr. Garrick was "hourly expected from England." The news of the English *furore* had travelled on long before him, and everyone was eager for some notion of the Goodman's Fields' triumphs. The party did not come on Saturday; but on Sunday morning Mr. Garrick, Miss Woffington, and Barberini, the dancing lady, arrived from Park Gate, Chester. by the packet. Two days after Garrick, arrived Delane, "the celebrated actor," who was to play at the rival theatre.

A Signora Avoglio, an Italian singer, had been announcing her last "concert of vocal and instrumental music," at the Music Hall, Fishamble Street, for the Wednesday following, but the first result of the new arrival was to tell upon her. The Italian artist could not struggle against the attraction of the new performers, who had fixed their opening performance for the same night. It was not surprising, therefore, to read: "N.B.—The above concert is *put off on account of the players' arrival from England* who

* It is now being turned into a warehouse.

perform that night, and have given up the Wednesday following to Signora Avoglio for her performance." Mrs. Cibber seems to have waited in Dublin until his engagement was over, and it was here that the alliance was formed between them, which she may have hoped, would have taken the shape of a closer connection. It was a pity, indeed, that the Dublin audience could not have seen them together; but Mrs. Woffington was in possession of the leading parts, and nothing is so inflexible, even to the prejudice of the public, as stage etiquette.

Margaret Woffington was an old favourite, and had been the delight of the town. Now she had returned fresh from her London triumphs, and was to enchant it again by her gay and dashing acting, as *Sir Harry Wildair*. She was "to open" the season on the Wednesday in her famous and popular character, while Garrick was kept over until Friday, in his great part of *Richard*.

The tradition of Garrick's success on that night has been handed down by historians of the Irish stage. Unhappily no details have been preserved. None of the papers were in the habit of giving criticisms or notices of performances at the theatres; but it is mentioned, that many more were turned away than were admitted. The theatre was not unworthy of the young actor. It was built on the best principles then known; was spacious, and remarkable for the excellent opportunities it afforded for seeing and hearing. It was, besides, the largest theatre in Dublin; but the stage was cramped and small, being sacrificed to the rest of the house.* Only the year before all the new

* Chetwood.

improvements in moving the scenes and flies, had been introduced. The new Dublin theatres, too, boasted of a modern luxury which the London houses did not at that time enjoy—a spacious crush-room or saloon, "richly ornamented," where the company waited after the play was over, chatting and seeing each other, until their carriages came up. They had boxes, or "lattises" (which were the same as the London "green boxes"), a pit, and two galleries, and on this great night boxes, "lattises," and galleries were crammed. So, too, was the stage, which was often oddly enough crowded with strangers, who were scarcely to be distinguished from the performers. The Lord Lieutenant—the Duke of Devonshire—and his Duchess, were unluckily absent in England at this time, so that the actor enjoyed no court attentions.

On the Monday following he made his second appearance in "The Orphan," with Mrs. Furnival as *Monimia;* while on the Tuesday, at the rival house, with something like desperation, Delane came on with *his* reading of "Richard." Even here the "old school" found it was to have no rest. Every day the new actor's reputation increased, and there was a growing eagerness to see him in new characters. The poorer classes were at this time suffering great distress, and the heats during the month of June were more than usually oppressive. A sort of epidemic which arose from both these causes was fancifully set down to the overcrowded houses, and was long recollected as the Garrick fever. Young men of fashion began to use a cant phrase: "That's your Garrick!" "As gay as Garrick!"

His benefit was fixed for Thursday, the 24th, when

he first astonished a Dublin audience by his favourite combination of deeply tragic and broadly humorous characters on the same night. "King Lear" was chosen at the particular desire of several persons of distinction, with "The Lying Valet," also by desire, after it. Margaret Woffington played *Cordelia.**

The city was at this time full of "persons of quality," with dramatic taste, so that the particular desire may be assumed to have been expressed to the actor personally. He was overwhelmed with civilities and attentions. He went through all his round of London characters, playing also in "The Busy Body," "The Fair Penitent," and "Love makes a Man," taking the character of *Don Dismallo Thick-Skullo de Half-Witto*, a claptrap name for *Clodio* in "The Fop's Fortune"—and in "The Rehearsal," and "Old Bachelor." The Lords Justices, the Primate, Lord Chancellor, and Speaker, went in great state to see "The Busy Body." His second benefit was on the 8th of July, with "Richard," but presently he had to submit to a companionship which a little later he would not have tolerated, namely, playing in "The Fair Penitent," supported by M. Delamain, of the French opera, in such foolery as the following:—"Act I. the Grecian Sailor; Act II. the Wooden Shoe Dance; Act III. the Old Woman with Pierrot in the Basket," &c. He also played in his farce of "Master Johnny the School-boy."

But his engagement was drawing to a close. On the 2nd of August "The Constant Couple" and "Lying

* She was announced in the bills as *Mrs.* Woffington, a change which she had adopted in London. On the first night she had been announced as Miss Woffington, and it is curious that she should have insisted on the same change being made at Covent Garden only the year before.

Valet" were announced for the last time. He himself was to have another and final benefit, for which it was said he had selected "The Fair Penitent;" but he changed it, as there was natural curiosity to see him in a far more popular play. No audience had yet witnessed his personation of the Danish prince, and he now resolved to try *Hamlet* for the first time, and before the Dublin public. He issued on the Saturday morning a curious personal announcement:—

"Mr. GARRICK thinks it proper to acquaint the town that he did not take 'The Fair Penitent' (as was given out) for his benefit, *that play being disapproved of by several ladies and gentlemen*, but by particular desire, deferred it till 'Hamlet' could be ready, which will be played on Thursday next,—the part of *Hamlet* by Mr. Garrick, *Ophelia* by Mrs. Woffington."

Mr. Garrick's last benefit with so familiar a play was sure to have drawn an overflowing house. He was carried through the part by frantic and enthusiastic applause. It was much criticised, and some of his readings were objected to. It was considered, however, a wonderful performance, full of beauties, especially the scenes between *Hamlet* and *Ophelia*, and *Hamlet* and the *Queen*. In short, an able critic who wrote to him anonymously two days after the performance, prophesied he would be "the best and most extraordinary player that ever these kingdoms saw." It was noted, too, that he came on without being "attended by music," which was always an accompaniment of the traditional "Hamlet;" and further, what was remarkable and almost courageous behaviour in the year 1742, that he left out every word that could shock a modest ear.

There was a general desire that he would play *Hamlet* again, and he performed it once more. Walker, the original *Macheath*, had now arrived from Covent Garden, and his aid enabled them to bring forward "The Recruiting Officer," with a "strong cast." *Kitely* was taken by Walker, *Silvia* by Woffington, and *Plume* by Garrick. This was on the Thursday after the "Hamlet" Thursday, and to the notices was appended a significant "N.B.—This is the last time of Mr. Garrick, Mrs. Woffington, and Signora Barberini's performing, during their stay in this kingdom." Finally, on the Monday following (Aug. 23), a sort of dramatic travelling party—Garrick, Delane, Dr. Arne (Mrs. Cibber's brother, who had come over to give concerts), and Mrs. Cibber—set off together from Dunleary Harbour and embarked for England. Woffington, it would appear, remained behind, and most likely sailed to Liverpool with the Smock Alley company, who set off the next day for Liverpool, to play during the Preston Jubilee. Thus ended the first Garrick visit, which had now lasted a few days over two months, and it was long remembered. After his departure came a perfect theatrical languor and prostration.

In Dublin the name of Roscius was first given to him,* and the papers teemed with verses in his honour.

* Murphy says, in some lines beginning

"Roscius, Paris of the stage,
Born to please a learned age,"

he was thinking of some verses written during the actor's second visit—

"O thou, the Phœnix of the age,
The prop and glory of the stage."

The "Paris of the stage" is his most amusing blunder.

Some lines on Horace's text, "Cur in Theatrum Cato severe venisti," were ingeniously turned:—

"In Roman days, once Cato the severe,
With awful brow went to the theatre.
But O, instead of manly fire and rage,
And all the true pathetic of the stage,
He saw, he heard the rant, the droll, the stare,
Saw nature and the passions murdered there.
Saw and retired—but should he now revive
And see glad nature in her Garrick live,
He'd laugh at *Bayes* and weep with injur'd *Lear*,
Curse tyrant *Richard*, but applaud the Play'r."

Behind him he left a kindly and grateful feeling. For a sick actor, attached to the theatre, he interested himself with Dr. Barry, then the fashionable physician of the city, whom he got to attend on him during his illness.* He, indeed, took away with him the most generous and grateful sentiments of the people of the place; and when later, what he called "a most cruel and false report" was set on foot, that he had spoken disrespectfully of the "gentlemen of Ireland," he thought it necessary "solemnly to avow that he had never even *thought* with indifference" of Ireland.

* Chetwood.

CHAPTER V.

REVOLT AGAINST FLEETWOOD—QUARREL WITH MACKLIN.

1742—1743.

Now returned to London, he was again to have but a short respite. Only a week or two after he arrived, Drury Lane season had begun, and though his first appearance did not take place for a fortnight, the interval could have been no mere holiday. Fleetwood opened on the eleventh of September with a strong company; and with Macklin, Mrs. Clive, Mrs. Pritchard, Woffington, and Garrick, prepared to meet Mrs. Cibber, Quin, Ryan, Bridgewater, and the rest of the old school, at Covent Garden. But the strength was unequal. Even the coming to Drury Lane was a fresh point scored for Garrick, whose "fine" patrons of the West-end were saved the long journey to the Minories. In vain might Quin declaim and "pave," and Ryan "whistle" from the old wound in his cheek. The game of the old school was played out. Garrick, with conscientious industry, had many new characters ready. *Scrub*, *Hastings*, *Plume*, with his Dublin characters, *Hamlet* and *Drugger*, were new to London. These were as various and successful as his older parts. There was but one failure. Mrs. Woffington, on her benefit night, yielded to him her part of *Sir Harry*, which he tried again on the following night, and then wisely abandoned. It was a complete failure;

and must have seemed grave and heavy, after the artificial piquancy added to the character, from its being played by so bold and lively an actress. The round of plays was admirably chosen, and selected with an infinite variety and contrast, which must have made the theatre then an entertainment delightful to playgoers. Every taste was suited, and Shakspeare, Steele, Congreve, Beaumont and Fletcher, Cibber, with the best pieces, succeeded each other. The new actor was overworked and hurried, and when the first night of Fielding's new comedy, "The Wedding Day," came round, it was scarcely surprising that he should have broken down. He was to have spoken the prologue, but to the surprise of the audience Macklin came forward with a free and easy apology. This familiarity began :—

"Gentleman and ladies—we must by your indulgence humbly hope you'll not be offended,
But an accident that has happened to-night, not in the least intended,
I assure you—if you please, your money shall be returned—but *Mr. Garrick to-day*,
Who performs a principal character in the Play,
Unfortunately has sent word 'twill be impossible, having so long a part,
To speak the Prologue—he hasn't had time to get it by heart." *

And this freedom almost seemed to show there was something wrong in the direction of the theatre.

Quin, meanwhile, was fighting a desperate and laborious battle at Covent Garden, acting almost every night, and in all the most weighty and varied characters. If Garrick was to appear in *Richard* on the thirteenth of October, Quin had also the same play on the thirteenth, and mouthed and "paved" in fiery and boisterous rivalry. *Falstaff* and *Julius*

* He did not appear until October 5th. Davies says he relinquished *Foppington* and *Clodio* this season, but the bills show that he acted both.

Cæsar were in vain attempted. Ryan and Hale and Bridgewater did their best, in these last assaults of the Old Guard:

"Mark one who tragical struts up and down,
And *rolls* the words as Sisyphus his stone.
His lab'ring arms unequal to the weight,
Heave, like a porter's, when at Billingsgate.
But who is he, that mincing trips along,
Making Lee's fury a mere op'ra song?
Two chattering daws next in some scene break loose,
And make a perfect rookery of the house.

* * * * * *

"One heavily drags on a Robe of State,
Lost in the diadem he seems to wear.
He mouths away and the spectators stare.
While this makes ev'n the *freest* speeches grave,
That makes 'em dance like corks upon the wave."*

These verses present a graphic picture of the almost grotesque system then prevailing, and which, like other old abuses, would struggle hard before giving way, and to the last would not see that dissolution was at hand. But their best auxiliary was to be the confusion that was obtaining behind the scenes at Drury Lane.

Mr. Charles Fleetwood, the manager, had been a gentleman of good fortune, having once, it was said, enjoyed six thousand a year, and had been tempted, like so many more, by the fatal seduction of theatrical management. "His person was genteel,† and his manner elegant," which, says Victor quaintly, "was the last and only remaining quality he kept with him to his death." It was not the difficulties of the theatre, nor a run of ill-fortune, that led him into embarrassment, but his own extravagant and expensive tastes.

* These lines are from a rare and curious satire on the contest between Garrick and Quin, entitled "A Clear Stage and no Favour."

† Davies.

He was fond of high society, and of the costly habits of high society; and he had an extraordinary fascination of manner, and a winning grace, that excited interest, not only in his "high" friends, but in the crowd of creditors who were always pressing him. Looking at the stories that are told of his successful appeals, he seems to have been an anticipation of the character of another manager, of a late era, who had the same extravagance and the same charm. His mother was daughter to Lord Gerrard; and the Duchess of Norfolk once told of a strange scene that took place in a Belgian town, in her presence, when Mrs. Fleetwood went on her knees, to implore pardon of a young lady whose life, she owned, she had wrecked by hindering a marriage between her, and her son, Fleetwood.* By these dissipated courses, he soon ruined his fortunes; but in 1734 had purchased the Drury Lane patent, and partially restored them. That theatre was destined to prove disastrous to a whole series of managers.

Macklin, then a sort of Bohemian, had been his friend and companion. Both frequented White's, where they gambled heavily, and were both equally unlucky. From this friend, after a successful benefit, or a run of good fortune at the gaming-table, he would borrow small sums, with a manner of sensitive distress which could soften the hardest creditor; and at one crisis, when he was on the point of being arrested, he obtained, from Macklin's easiness, security for a bond of some two or three thousand pounds. This was a serious obligation for the latter, and he determined to free himself on the first opportunity. When Fleetwood

* Duke of Norfolk's Thoughts and Essays, 1668.

was taking the Prince of Wales round Bartholomew Fair, attending him with torches, and acting as *cicerone*, Macklin presented himself, with loud voice and frantic Manner, pretended he had "broken jail," and insisted on unconditional release. Fleetwood, fearful of exposure before his august patron, promised to meet him that very night at the "Bunch of Grapes," in Clare Market, and actually came, attended by his solicitor, Mr. Forrest, and Paul Whitehead, who generously offered to take Macklin's place in the bond. Whitehead had some means, and believed that the arrangement was merely temporary, and did not know how deeply Fleetwood was involved. When the manager's affairs grew worse and worse, and he ultimately had to fly to France, leaving everything in hopeless confusion, the unfortunate poet was thrown into prison to answer for the bond to which he had so rashly put his name.* Macklin's sense, however, was of excellent service. So long as he held his office of "deputy manager," matters went on tolerably, and were tided over for a few seasons. But every hour the improvident Fleetwood was sinking deeper and deeper: though he was adroit enough to stave off the final crash for a time.

The intimacy with Mrs. Woffington still continued, and the Irish Tour had only drawn the admirer more closely to the actress. Macklin had been one of her warm friends; and the three being now so intimate, it was agreed that they should "keep house" together, and put all earnings into one common stock. They lodged at a house which, not many years back, could be pointed out as No. 6, Bow Street.

* Kirkman.

It was eventually proposed to found a sort of academy, for teaching acting—a scheme which Macklin later carried out, on his own account. This arrangement went on for a short time; but, like most such arrangements, required a greater delicacy and forbearance, than the party could muster. Woffington's "month"—for they took the housekeeping "month about" — was conspicuous for a certain prodigality, and a greater run of good company. The wits of the day were found there; and Mr. Johnson, then a young hack writer, came often, and told as a proof of his host's stinginess, that Garrick had one night said "the tea, ma'am, is as red as blood!" Dr. Hoadly also found his way there; and, once at breakfast, read her his farce, from the French of Molière, entitled "The Ladies' Frolic." Mr. Garrick's month was said to be very economically conducted. This was only the beginning of the favourite stock charges of "meanness," "stinginess," and the like, which it was the delight of every little histrionic cur—to whom he might have once refused a crust—to yelp out noisily all over the town. From a certain thrift in trifles, always odious to those who are themselves extravagant in trifles, but niggards in large matters, he was not free—but if he seemed to look after the pence, it was that he might give away pounds. Such a character is quite intelligible. Macklin, after their quarrel, and with a disloyalty inconceivable outside the acting world of that day, was indefatigable in propagating these stories; and Foote, the most selfish of convivialists, and whose answer to any one asking aid would most likely be a coarse jest, was his ardent *collaborateur*. Envy always enters a good deal into

this feeling; and to the spendthrift the economy of a friend is a standing reproach. When, therefore, it came to be the great Mr. Garrick, with his villa at Hampton, and his house, the best in Southampton Street—his flourishing theatre, his visits to the Duke of Devonshire, and acquaintance with lords — then Macklin, out of work, and reduced to strange shifts, was going about telling idle stories of what *he* could recollect of the actor's less prosperous days. Even when grown an old man, and he had long since graciously condoned all quarrels by accepting engagements from Mr. Garrick, taking benefits, and having plays brought out—even then he could "mumble out" "Yes, sir, in *talk* he was a very generous man, a humane man, and all that; but, by G—d, sir, the very first ghost of a farthing he met with," &c.

In these days they used to ride together on the Richmond road, and halt at various houses; and when the bill was brought, or they found themselves at a turnpike, Mr. Garrick found "he had changed his breeches that morning;" or would pull out a thirty-six shilling piece, which could not be changed. This accommodation was usually forgotten; until one day, Macklin asked him to pay his debt, and then pulled out a slip of paper, in which all the little obligations were entered according to time and place. "All which, sir," said Macklin, telling the story, "amounted to between thirty and forty shillings." Garrick was a little disconcerted, and thought it a joke; but the other insisted seriously on his claim, and was duly paid. From thirty to forty shillings! and this between a pair who had been living as brothers for months and years. Well might he be disconcerted at

this elaborate "book-keeping" for such a trifle. But if there be truth in this story—that is, no exaggeration—he compensated for such carelessness by a thousand instances of substantial liberality.

On another occasion Garrick had given a large dinner-party to Mrs. Cibber, Fielding, Macklin himself, and some more. When the company was gone, Garrick's Welsh servant went over his vails with great glee: "There is half-a-crown from Mrs. Cibber, Got pless her! and here is something more from the poet, Got pless his merry heart!" This was Fielding's donation, which was done up in paper, and found to be a penny. Garrick, next day, with perfect good taste and good sense, reproached Fielding with choosing *a servant* for the subject of such a jest. The other offensively replied that it was no jest on the servant, but a benefit; for if he had given him half-a-crown, his master would have taken it; whereas he now had *a chance* of keeping it really for himself! Fielding told this about as an excellent piece of humour; and Macklin retold it to Mr. Cooke, who gives it as an illustration of Garrick's avarice. It will be seen that it neither "illustrates" nor proves anything but the bad taste and ill-nature of the guests, and of Mr. Garrick's friends.

The household arrangement was soon broken up. Indeed it could scarcely have been a profitable concern for Garrick, whose income was so much larger than that of the others. It is said that the partnership had to be dissolved in consequence of heavy liabilities, owing to extravagant management or to the lady's inconstancy. No actress indeed had so many admirers.

A letter of hers—perhaps the only one in existence—has been preserved, which is singularly characteristic, and shows that she was entertaining other admirers besides Mr. Garrick. Master Thomas Robinson must have been a son of that "long Sir Thomas," who was one of the butts of the day; and the gaiety and dramatic character of the style is very remarkable:

"My pretty little Oroonoko

"I'm glad to hear of y^r^ safe arrival in Sussex, and that you are so well placed, in the noble family of Richm^d^ &c. for w^ch^ I have y^e^ most profound regard and respect.

"Sir Thomas Robinson writes me word y^t^ you are very pretty which has raised my curiosity to a great pitch & it makes me long to see you.

"I hear the acting poetaster is w^th^ you still, at Goodwood and has had the insolence to brag of favours from me; vain Coxcomb!

"I did, indeed, by the persuasion of M^r^ Swiny and his assistance answer the simpleton's nauseous lett^r^—foh!

"He did well, truly, to throw my lett^rs^ into the fire, otherwise it must have made him appear more ridiculous than his amour at Bath did, or his Cudgel playing with y^e^ rough Irish Man.

"Saucy Jackanapes! to give it for a reason for the burning my letter, that there were expressions too tender & passionate in it to be shewn.

"I did in an ironical way (which the booby took in litteral sense) complim^t^ both my self & him, on the successe we shared mutually, on his first appearance, on y^e^ stage; and that which he had (all to himselfe) in the part of Carlos in Love Makes a Man; when with an undaunted modesty he withstood the attack of his foes, arm'd with Catt-calls & other offensive weapons.

"I did, indeed, give him a little double meaning touch, on the expressive and graceful motion of his hands & arms, as assistants to his energick way of delivering y^e^ poets sentim^ts^ & w^ch^ he must have learned from y^o^ youthfull manner of spreading plaisters, when he was aprentice.

"These, these I say, were the true motives to his burning the Lett^r^ and no passionate expressions of mine.

"I play the part of S^r^ Harry Wildair to night, & can't recollect w^t^ I said to the impertinent monster, in my Lett^r^ nor have I time to say any more now, but y^t^ you shall hear from me by the next post & if Swiny has a copy of it or I can recover the chief articles in it you shall have em.

"I am (my D^r^ Black boy)
"with my duty to their Graces
"y^r^ admirer & humble Serv^t^
"Saturday X^br^ 18^th^ 1743. "MARGARET WOFFINGTON."

(ENDORSEMENT)
"For Master Thomas Robinson
"at Goodwood in
"Sussex."*

* It might seem difficult to identify the "acting poetaster" who is so

It must be remembered, too, that at this time she had not become the Woffington of later years—grown quarrelsome, dissolute, and scurrilous. She had not then given her tongue that loose and ready freedom, which Mrs. Bellamy called "blackguarding"—nor had she yet begun to pull caps with rivals in the green-room. There was a certain restraint, and even refinement, which was still to hold her admirer enchained.

The warm friendship between Macklin and Garrick had not been interrupted. At the beginning of the season they had engaged to stand by each other, and decline any separate engagement. They saw the manager's embarrassments were increasing, and that it was necessary they should be prepared to look for a new arrangement. This curious alliance gave them a common strength; but even then Garrick had doubts as to Macklin being in league with Fleetwood, and using his influence for the manager's benefit. He had some "starts of suspicion," and insisted on an explicit contradiction from the latter. This did not promise well. Fleetwood had been always dissipated, but latterly his dissipation had begun to take low and degrading shapes. He had been addicted to cards and dice, but he now sank to the company of boxers and horse-chaunters. He was always seen with Broughton, the famous pugilist; frequented Hockley-in-the-Hole, where the humane pastime of baiting went on; and what was lower still, in theatrical matters affected the society of rope-dancers and dancing-

comically described. It must refer to Hill, just then beginning his career. He had been an apothecary. He had a scuffle at some public gardens, and had been beaten by an Irish gentleman. Two or three months later he was playing with Macklin at the Haymarket as a new actor: and finally, in a novel called "Lovel," he boasted of being the accepted lover of Mrs. Woffington..

monkey proprietors. Under such leadership, the interests of the theatre, always precarious, were utterly neglected, and it soon began to go to ruin. The result was what might be expected. Though there was a fine company, and good audiences, money began to fail. The receipts were farmed away, and presently bailiffs began to appear behind the scenes.* This state of things could not go on long. The salaries of the actors were falling into arrear. Such are always the first victims of theatrical ruin—the manager perhaps the last. Their services may be, for a time at least, secured gratuitously: for they are unwilling by sudden desertion to lose all chance of arrears, and work on in expectation.

Garrick was the heaviest sufferer by this failure. His salary was now over six hundred pounds in arrear, and as often as he had applied, the manager had assured him of payment with every ingenious variety of assurance, and even oaths. At last the actor's patience was worn out, and he came to the resolution of suing his creditor at law. With this view he invited himself, one Sunday morning, to breakfast, determining to tell the manager what he had resolved on. Long after, Garrick used to describe this meeting as an illustration of the charm of winning manners and fascination of speech. So agreeable and "bewitching" was Fleetwood's conversation, on every matter but the one which it was his interest to avoid, that he com-

* Garrick's rich cap, which he wore in "Richard," a mass of gaudy feathers, tinsel, and stage jewels, once attracted their greedy eyes; but it was saved by the unconscious ambiguity of David Garrick's faithful Welsh servant. "You must not take that," he said to them, "for it belongs to the king." They were said to have been awe-struck at this notion, and reluctantly resigned their prey.

pletely won over the actor, who went away without having the heart to enter on the matter. This shows a delicacy and sensibility in Garrick, and his subsequent behaviour proves that he was not a harsh creditor.

At last his patience gave way, and at the beginning of May, 1743, he positively refused to act, and for three weeks was absent from the theatre. A more decisive step was presently taken, under his leadership, he being then but twenty-seven years old. He invited all his *confrères* to meet him at his house in Covent Garden—"Mr. West's, cabinet-maker,"—and there submitted a plan of combination for their adoption. There was always a temperateness and method about his plans which at once recommended what he proposed.

There were present the two Mills', Leigh, Havard, the Pritchards, Berry, and Woodburn; Blakes, Yates, Giffard, and a few more, seem to have kept aloof. Garrick then stated the nature of their situation, and invited them to sign an agreement binding them to stand by each other. He had determined that they should all apply to the Duke of Grafton, then Chamberlain, for a licence to open a new theatre at the Opera House or elsewhere, and was certain when that nobleman had heard of the way they were treated, he would not hesitate to grant what they asked. In fact, they had a lucky precedent in an old combination of the same kind, in the days of Rich, when Bethell and Thomas Barry had gone to the Earl of Dorset and had been assisted by him.*

* This account is made up from the statements and counter-statements published by both Macklin and Garrick. Such was the true quarter to look to, for a fair account of this much debated quarrel.

This proposal was received with acclamation. It was curious, however, that Macklin alone should have opposed this plan, and suggested going to the manager at once, and telling him what they *intended* doing. Garrick calmly showed the folly of such a course. He knew what manner of man Fleetwood was; and if they should "show him their hand," he would be certain to circumvent them in some fashion. The other players also agreed, that it would be idle to enter into terms with a man who had so often deluded them with promises. A paper was signed, and Macklin overruled. "Thus," says the latter's biographer, "were his best intentions frustrated, and a set of men cajoled into the designs of *this ambitious person*, who had for his object not merely the redress of the wrongs of a few players, but the interested view of aggrandizing himself." This was written almost under the dictation—at least under the inspiration—of Macklin himself. Yet it is not a little suspicious that just before this meeting, Macklin had been with the manager, who had been making him handsome offers. Fleetwood himself owns that he raised his salary three pounds a week, to get him to use his influence over the disaffected actors.* Thus it does seem more than probable, he had been trying a *separate* accommodation with the manager, and that his opposition at the actors' meeting was prompted by this very bribe.

They drew up their application, which they sent in to the Chamberlain, then waited on him, but were very coldly received. It was said that he turned to

* Macklin himself boasted, as a proof of his fidelity to this agreement, that he had been offered 200*l.* a-year more to remain with Fleetwood. He forgot that this suspicious offer was made just before the actors' meeting.

Garrick, and asked him what income he was making by his acting. The answer was, about £500 a year. "And do you think that too little," said the Duke, with true contempt for a mere player, "when *I* have a son who has to venture his life for his country for half that sum?" He was right, certainly, in declining the application; the miserably demoralized state of the existing houses did not encourage the creation of a new one.

This was a serious blow. Mr. Garrick, whom all the nobility had crowded to see, evidently declined in popular favour. Fleetwood enjoyed his triumph; cast about him; got together a fresh troupe; and at the new season, opened his doors boldly, without the seceders. But he was furious with Macklin, who had cast his lot with the others, and whom he had laid under obligations of the most serious and delicate kind.* Garrick then thought of joining with Quin and of taking Lincoln's Inn Theatre, and overtures were made to Rich, through Macklin; but this scheme fell through, owing, Garrick says, to a "cartel" proposed by Macklin, which would have restricted the privileges they were struggling for.† Macklin having now fairly broken with Fleetwood, became a little concerned for himself, but was assured by Garrick that he would not desert him—that they were all in the "same boat," and could, repeated Macklin, artfully, "*at the worst*, set off for Ireland, and make money together there. *This*," he added, "*was to be the dernier ressort.*"

* Macklin had been tried for murder, and Fleetwood had "stood by him all through his difficulties."

† On the other hand Macklin says, it was Garrick that would only take it for a year.

Time was wearing on; it was now approaching the regular season. The condition of the inferior players "on strike," with whom everything had failed, was growing pitiable. There was nothing open to them; and their only resource—a humiliating one—was submission to the enemy. They applied to him. He was master of the situation. Some he promised to take back, others he did not want. He made the handsomest offers to Garrick, but positively declined on any terms to have anything to do with Macklin. Hence arose a public difference between the two great actors; a notorious scandal; and it will at once seem intelligible how such a difference should arise. For Macklin, finding himself so pointedly tabooed, and exempted from the indemnity, would be anxious that "the strike" should continue in *some* shape, for his benefit.

The conclusion, I think, will be that Garrick acted with honour and good sense—though perhaps without a punctilious and Quixotic adherence to the mere *letter* of an agreement. He at first positively declined any overtures that did not include Macklin. He even offered, under a penalty of £100, to answer for his behaviour. When this failed, he proposed, if Mr. Macklin went to Ireland, to provide for Mrs. Macklin in London, with a weekly salary,—to guarantee Macklin himself in his Irish engagement, and make up any deficiency. But Macklin was furious and clamorous; said a solemn engagement had been violated, and that he had been sacrificed. Yet it was mere special pleading, thus to suppose his interests were to be supported at the sacrifice of the majority. And though certainly, in a common working man's strike, it seems hard to desert a leader whom the employer had proscribed;

the true equity is for the fellow-workmen to indemnify him, and gain the advantage of their own submission. It is true, certainly, that there had been an engagement between him and Garrick, prior to the common one, in which the players were concerned; but on his own showing, this was to last only "until redress was obtained." Even on the principles of common sense, such engagements are not to be construed with all the technicality of a bond; otherwise Garrick might have been bound for his whole life, or for so long as the irregular behaviour of his companion lasted. The fact was, Macklin saw that he was to be made a scapegoat by the manager; and this incident had not entered into the scope of their agreement. It was an unexpected turn. Various meetings were held to arrange the matter, but without any issue. Meanwhile the unfortunate actors were kept in a state of suspense and destitution. Some, it has been mentioned, had been taken back, and Garrick, greatly pressed by the manager, at last yielded; but made it a condition, that the rest should be taken back also. This was agreed to; so that if Macklin now gave his consent, all would be accommodated. The Players then addressed a remonstrance to him, in a letter couched in almost piteous terms, saying that "this punctilio of honour" was ruining them; that they feared Mr. Garrick was going to Ireland, so as to stand by his agreement, in which case the manager would have nothing to do with them; almost imploring him to come to some terms: and again appealing to Garrick, who made fresh exertions to compromise the matter. He proposed to take a hundred guineas less salary from Fleetwood, and engaged in the most solemn

manner to work unremittingly, to smooth away all obstacles to Macklin's re-engagement. But nothing would be accepted, save the selfish alternative that Garrick and all the other actors should "stand out," and sacrifice themselves, because his own behaviour had precluded him from all hope of reconciliation. Garrick could hesitate no longer, and prepared to close with Fleetwood. He held himself discharged from all community with so impracticable a partner.

On September the 13th, the new season had begun, Fleetwood having now some of his old corps at the old salaries, and others at the half their previous wages, which they were glad to get. Mrs. Woffington was at her post, but does not seem to have joined in the *émeute*. Nearly three months had passed by—it came to the end of November—and still Garrick did not appear. Strange reports had been going round the town, as to the reason of this extraordinary suspense, and these were not favourable to him. On the eve of concluding his engagement, he appealed to the town in a letter to the public journals, in which he shortly explained the true reason,—a very modest and judicious letter. He was sensible, he said, that his affairs were too inconsiderable to be laid before the public; but as he was their servant, and had been treated with such indulgence, he thought it was his duty to show that it was not "obstinacy or exorbitancy" that kept him from their service, but a wish to bring about a reconciliation with the manager, which was now almost accomplished. In a few days it was known that all was accommodated, and Mr. Garrick was announced in his great part of *Bayes*, in "The Rehearsal."

This news caused a commotion. Macklin had a number of Bohemian allies — Dr. Barrowby, the physician, Corbyn Morris, and others—who met at the Horns Tavern, in Fleet-street, and debated the wrongs of their friend, and what Macklin's biographer absurdly called "the imperishable infamy of Garrick's apostasy." It was determined to take action in more ways than one. On December the 5th Garrick was announced; and on that day a "Case," hastily got up, and written by Macklin, was launched upon the town.* There could be no question as to the malignity of this step and the object in their choice of the day. No time was lost by either party. A handbill was presently circulated about the town, and the theatre, signed by the great actor, in which he humbly begged the public to suspend their judgment for a day or two, until an answer to that appeal had been prepared. When the curtain rose on Tuesday, the following night, the pit was found to be filled with Macklin's friends, led by the party from the Horns Tavern. When Garrick appeared, the uproar burst out. He was saluted with yells of "Off! off!" He bowed low, and with extraordinary submission and humility, entreated to be heard. But no hearing would be vouchsafed him. Then eggs and apples and peas came showering on the stage, while the great actor was seen calmly standing high up at the wing to escape the attack. The play was not allowed to go on, and the curtain had to be let down.

On the next day, Garrick having secured an ally in

* Macklin's biographer, Kirkman, gives Corbyn Morris as the author; but Davies "has authority for saying" that it was by Macklin himself. The truth may be between, such productions being then often the common work of the author and his friends.

Guthrie, a Scotch "hack-writer," rapidly drew up a reply.* But for the next night he took counsel with his friends. Some of them, with Colonel Wyndham, of Norfolk, a man of note, repaired to the theatre in force.† Fleetwood's low tastes for once brought him profit. A crowd of his pugilist friends, headed by Broughton and Taylor, were privately admitted into the pit, before the doors were opened. Just before the curtain rose, the leader of this formidable band stopped the music, and standing up said, in a loud, rough voice, "Gentlemen, I am told some persons have come here, with an intention of interrupting the play. Now, *I* have come to hear it, and have paid my money, and advise those who have come with such a view to go away, and not hinder my diversion." This plain and sensible speech raised a terrific uproar. The bruisers drew together, began the fray, and very soon cleared the pit of the Macklinites. Then the piece began. Mr. Garrick appeared with many respectful bows, and went through his part amid the acclamations of his friends. This was his first theatrical battle.

On the next day his answer appeared. Though it was said to be written by Guthrie, we can discover traces of his own pen. There was one passage which

* There is a characteristic in the discussion almost amusing. Macklin's statement was headed the "Case of *Charles Macklin, Comedian.*" This style the other declined to adopt, and his letter is headed, "*Mr. Garrick's* answer to *Mr. Macklin.*" Macklin, with an ostentatious self-abasement, retorted with a Reply to "Mr. Garrick's answer to the case of *Charles Macklin, Comedian.*" This was a little weakness of Roscius, who to the end of his life was always "*Mr.* Garrick," and succeeded in asserting his title to that description.

† Colonel Wyndham was one of the men of fashion of the day. He had served Maria Teresa; was a handsome man, an accomplished swordsman, and father to the better-known William Wyndham.

had a certain warmth, and which, when read in Ireland, must have won him many friends, namely, his kindly declaration of affection for the people of that country, and grateful acknowledgment of their kindness.

In this struggle, therefore, Macklin was routed. The victory was with his rival, of whom he became the bitter enemy. From that time his tongue never ceased its busy slanders, ringing the changes on Garrick's "meanness," though in course of time he could bring himself to ask favours from the man he had so treated. The whole episode proves his rough, ill-conditioned, and violent character—furious and intemperate; as is well shown in this production, which is full of phrases like—"your treachery"—"you have no notion of honour"—"your mean disposition," and such language. Even then, he was glad to have the opportunity of repeating his favourite charge—"not only treacherous, but also an avaricious disposition; be so good as to tell whose picture it is; for you very well know, and are a fond admirer of the original." Mrs. Clive had shown her spirit and her early dislike of Garrick; for during the first stages of the quarrel she deserted his side. Had Macklin been temperate and loyal, his proscription would have been an eternal claim, which Garrick would never have ignored; and he would certainly have shared in the latter's great good fortune. Proscribed by all parties, the unlucky actor seemed to be shut out of every House, and was driven to open that strange histrionic academy at the Haymarket, where he brought out Mr. Foote and Dr. Hill.

CHAPTER VI.

SHERIDAN.—QUARREL WITH WOFFINGTON.

1743—1745.

After this inauspicious opening, the season proceeded. Garrick's popularity had not been impaired,* and he added the new characters of *Macbeth* "as written by Shakspeare," *Biron*, *Lord Townly*, *Zaphna*, and *Regulus*, to his stock. The two latter were bald, conventional figures, mere sketches, poor lath and plaster constructions, without nature, blood, or feeling, and mere vehicles for frothy declamation. Yet they were the beginning of a long line; and it is inconceivable that Garrick should, even in the way of business, have associated himself with such parts. It must have been a real treat to have seen him and Mrs. Woffington in *Lord* and *Lady Townly*—a true exhibition of pleasant comedy, done with infinite spirit. During the season, old Cibber played his own parts of *Fondlewife* and *Sir John Brute*, while his son, afterwards to be one of Garrick's most scurrilous enemies, was also of the company, and actually played *Abel Drugger* a few nights after the other had played it. He could even challenge his enemy in *Bayes*. Well might a friend of Garrick's ask "what demon pos-

* At his benefit five rows of the pit were railed into boxes, and the ladies were desired to send their servants three hours before the doors opened. Strange to say, the Dublin Theatre was the only one in the kingdom where ladies were not admitted to the Pit.

sessed him thus to exhibit himself?" It was thought he never performed it so ill—leaving out half his grimaces and buffoonery—it was supposed, because he saw Garrick among the audience. Another feature of the season was the engagement of a gentleman, from Macklin's curious Show in the Haymarket, who appeared in *Othello* and *Foppington*. The name of this actor was not given; but he was already well known to Garrick, and perhaps already feared by him. For his voice was heard loud enough at the coffee-houses, supporting claims to be the exponent of the true school of natural acting, allowing that Garrick was natural and easy, but not natural and easy enough; and that "he wanted the due amount of spirit and courage to take tragedy completely off its stilts."* He was of course on Macklin's side, in the Fleetwood quarrel, and thus this curious intimacy, beginning on a footing half war, half peace, was to continue in the same curious tone, for nearly forty years. The young player was only three-and-twenty, even then "a most incompressible fellow," of ready wit and tongue; dreadful in exposing what he thought "humbug," or any false assumption of decorum, and destined to the end to be the sharpest of the many thorns in Garrick's side.

Fleetwood now allowed an old blind Dublin doctor to come forward on his stage and play *Tiresias*, the blind soothsayer.† This charity was no doubt owing to Garrick's good nature, who, when he came to have the power, was unwearied in proffering his theatre for any charity.

* Forster's "Essay on Foote," p. 350.

† "It is hoped," said a newspaper, setting out his claims, "that as this will be the first instance of any person labouring under so heavy a deprivation performing on the stage, and the novelty, as well as the unhappiness of his case, will engage the favour and protection of a British audience."

At the other house Quin and Ryan, reinforced by Mrs. Clive—who in the late quarrel had contrived to offend both Fleetwood and Garrick—kept up the struggle. They chose nearly the same round of plays. The town had an opportunity of comparing two *Macbeths*, and the contrast must have been extraordinary. Garrick himself was among Quin's audience, and described that most singular conception of the part, which shows how absurd and mistaken were some of the principles that regulated the old school. In the famous scene he clutched at the dagger, not once but several times, first with one hand, then with the other, at the same time ludicrously striving as it were to keep on the ground, much as a drowning man plunges and strikes out wildly. In the ghost scene he drew his sword, and kept making passes at the spectre until he had driven him quite off the stage. But Garrick owned some of his great merits, which triumphed over these absurdities, "his slow, manly, folding-up of his faculties, his body gradually gathering up at the vision, his mind keeping the same time, denoting by the eye its strong workings. He did not dash the goblet to the ground, but let it gently fall from him, as if unconscious of having such a vehicle in his hand."* Quin, only a few months later, was to acknowledge this severity, by a far shorter and smarter criticism on a new character of his rival's. He had set off for Dublin, where he had always been a favourite, sure to find his reign undisputed there. But his gradual fall seemed to be marked with a whole series of mortifications, and on his arrival he was told he could not

* This criticism is quoted by Boaden, as written in the year 1744. But he does not say where he found it.

even have a night, as the town was running "horn mad" after a new local actor of the most wonderful powers.

When Mr. Garrick was in Dublin, he had met a young student of Trinity College, son to a well-known clergyman of the city—Doctor Sheridan, Swift's friend. This young gentleman—at that time well stage-struck—unable to resist the spell, had only a few months later himself gone on the stage, to the consternation of his friends, who were shocked at the disgrace. He succeeded perfectly, and became the rage of the hour. Garrick took infinite interest in his career, and with that kindness for beginners which was always his characteristic, wrote over to invite him to stay the whole summer with him, and proposed that they should play together at Drury Lane, offering to give him up any of his own characters. In the young man's answer to this handsome offer, though put with affected diffidence—"a well cut pebble," he said, "may pass for a diamond till a fine brilliant is placed near it"—can be seen traces of the arrogance and temper which later made him so impracticable a character to deal with. His head was already turned. As to playing at one house, it was impossible; they would "clash too much" in regard to the characters. He then hinted a rather conceited proposal of their playing alternately in London and Dublin, "dividing the kingdoms" between them, for he was convinced that Dublin was as well able to pay one actor for a winter as London was. They were to be like the two buckets in a well. But this was the vanity of supposing that both buckets were of equal strength and weight; and the difference Sheridan was to discover later, by the sure test of thin houses and empty boxes.

It was pleasure, not business, he said, that was taking him to town, for "a jaunt of three weeks." He had hardly time to do anything, having had "to study and act three new characters within a fortnight," one of which was *Othello!* This lightness contrasted ill with Garrick's thoughtful and diligent preparation. When he did come to town, he was engaged, not at Drury Lane, but at Covent Garden.

That new season of 1744-5 was to have troubles of its own. The Drury Lane company was strengthened with the tender Cibber—a valuable auxiliary for Garrick in such plaintive parts as *Monimia, Belvidera,* and *Andromache*, and by Sheridan, who had come to join his friend. Garrick made his first appearance on the 19th of October, Sheridan on the following night. Garrick was therefore sincere in his protestation of friendship, for a word from him could have prevented the engagement of a rival. He indeed was virtually directing the theatre. The same toleration allowed the return of Macklin, who was restored to his old place, and made his submission in a humiliating prologue:

> "From scheming, fretting, fuming, and despair,
> Behold to grace restored an exiled player.
> Your sanction yet his fortune must complete,
> And give him privilege to laugh and—eat."

But he was not to be reconciled, though he admitted there were in the green-room "longer heads" than his, to whom he would in future leave the conduct of affairs. He was presently to see the manager made the object of just such a scene of violence as he himself had organised against Garrick, and which it is not improbable was got up by the same party.

Among other attractions, the manager had brought out a costly pantomime called "The Fortune-tellers," and to reimburse himself for the increased charges, new engagements, scenery, &c., found it necessary to make some advance in the price of admission. This was received with deep dissatisfaction, for the raising of prices had only been tolerated in the case of an entirely new entertainment. On the night of Saturday, the 7th of November, the audience took their favourite method of showing their displeasure by a riot. The performance was interrupted. There was an affectation of being disgusted with pantomimes, and that class of entertainment, and a handbill was actually circulated proposing that the "advance money" should be returned to those who did not choose to wait and be "tortured with entertainments." This was a mere pretence. The manager was called for tumultuously, but with some spirit declined to appear before them, pleading exemption, as not being an actor; but said he would be willing to receive a deputation in his room. Some delegates were accordingly sent from the pit, and the audience waited their return patiently. On the Monday night a concession was announced. Any persons who did not choose to stay for a new piece, pantomime, &c., might ask for a special check at the door, on presenting which, they might have the advanced price returned to them. It was to be the second appearance of Garrick, in his excellent character of *Sir John Brute*; but that famous piece of acting had no spell. Indeed the "concession" was mainly illusory, as those whose money was to be returned, would have still paid the old price, and yet have to leave the theatre at an early part of the night.

The riot broke out again with fury. On this occasion it was organized. The moment the doors were opened, the rioters burst in, and swept the door-keepers from their places, the theatre was given to sack and confusion, the benches torn up, the sconces pulled down and flung on the stage—a favourite and traditional fashion with a dissatisfied audience, of showing their displeasure. When they were about invading the stage to tear down the scenery, it became time to interfere. A number of constables, "carpenters, and scene-men," came from behind, and stood to its defence. "A country gentleman," conspicuous as a ring-leader, was dragged from the boxes, and brought before a magistrate, a proceeding which the mob affected to think an outrage on their dignity, though he was later released. The manager, whose property was thus outrageously dealt with, was put on his defence, as it were, and exculpated himself humbly in a pamphlet, urging that he was merely protecting his property. Such indeed has been the rather exceptional tone in all English theatrical disturbances, audiences having always claimed the outrageous privilege of setting themselves right, by sacking their enemy's theatre. After wreaking their fury in this fashion, the manager was allowed to repair his House, and further concession was not insisted on.*

Macklin must have had some satisfaction in witnessing what was scarcely a failure, but what some were eager to consider a failure; for, on March the 7th, Garrick attempted "Othello," for the first time. Then it was that old Quin, turning to Hoadly, made the smart

* One of the advertisements ran: "The company cannot play till to-morrow evening, as the damages have not been repaired."

and not unfair criticism, "Here's Pompey, but where's the tea-kettle and lamp"—an association that became almost irresistible to any one thinking of the short figure, the blacked face, and the bright scarlet officer's coat in which he absurdly dressed himself. Otherwise he played it well, as we know from the testimony of two friends;* and, indeed, the character, full of fitful gusts of passion, must have suited him excellently. But no splendour of acting could have triumphed over the likeness to Hogarth's "black page."

Sheridan, meanwhile, was growing in favour by aid of strong lungs, and "words enforced with weight." He seems to have had all the coldness of a professional elocutionist; and an old playgoer,† who saw him in decay, was struck with his stiff features and inharmonious voice. He was given every advantage. With a surprising superiority to that petty jealousy which has been at the bottom of half the scandals of the profession, Garrick allowed his friend to appear in *Richard*, *Hamlet*, *Pierre*, *Othello*—parts that belonged to him. Yet very soon there was a party formed who affected to think the Irish actor was kept back, and who affected to consider him superior to the established favourite. Under such conditions came jealousy, with a coolness, and later an open quarrel. Indeed it was always Garrick's fate to be harassed by the sensitiveness and pretensions of the rising actors, for whom his very indulgence and encouragement was but a foundation for grievances and exorbitant demands.

* Victor and Aston. This jest has been also attributed to Foote.

† Boaden.

Thomson, the author of the "Seasons," had now ready his "Tancred and Sigismunda," a romantic and pathetic piece, and perhaps, after Hughes's "Siege of Damascus," the best of what Johnson so happily called "the Tig and Tiry" school.* Pitt and Lord Lyttleton were deeply interested in the success of this play; and, indeed, it was said to have been at their instance that it was produced. They attended the rehearsals, and their hints are said to have been received by the players "with great respect, and *embraced with implicit confidence.*" † Indeed, the play was well calculated to bring out all the love and pathos of two such tender actors. It flowed on in a strain of rapture and chivalrous ardour, which later recommended it for the exceptional honour of French translation. ‡

In the beginning of April Garrick had been seized with a severe illness, and his parts had to be taken by others. By this time, also, the disorder in the management of the theatre had come to a crisis. Hopelessly involved by debt and dissipation, Fleetwood was at last obliged to retire, and yet, considering his bankrupt condition, contrived to make surprisingly good terms. He had brought the theatre to a desperate pass. He had already mortgaged the patent for three thousand pounds to Sir Thomas de Lorme and Mr. Masters; and had cajoled an unsuspicious Mr. Meure or More to

* Alluding to the names in an Eastern Piece, *Tigranes* and *Tiridates;* Murphy says it was brought out in February. He is a month astray.

† Davies.

‡ Davies believes that it was the bringing out of this drama that brought Garrick in relation with these distinguished persons. But, as we have seen, it was his own theatrical success that occasioned the introduction. It is inconceivable the amount of trifling mistakes like these in which both Davies and Murphy abound. But Murphy is by far the greatest blunderer.

advance more money for the redemption of the patent, who was told that seven thousand pounds would set it quite free, his security being the theatre properties and wardrobe, with a title to enjoy all the receipts. But he was presently surprised by seeing in the papers a public notice, that the patent was to be put up to sale under a decree in Chancery. He had been tricked, and found himself in this embarrassing position, that he might be the owner of a theatre, its scenery and properties, but without patent or licence to use either. This stroke of craft was characteristic of Fleetwood, who, indeed, was now said to have turned a sort of "sharper."

About this time Rich, the manager of Covent Garden, had in his service a stage manager called Lacy, a business-like Irishman, who had made a little money by speculation, and who, in his dealings with men of business, had been found "honest" and exact —then an almost exceptional virtue in the actor's world. When the theatre came into the market, two persons of substance from the City, being anxious to venture in theatrical speculation, came to Lacy, though he was personally a stranger to them, and proposed to him to join them, he undertaking the theatrical management. They were content to find two-thirds of the purchase-money, and if his share was not forthcoming, would allow it to remain out, as it were, on mortgage.

This arrangement seemed acceptable, and was being drawn up by Green and Amber, a City house, who were to have been bankers to the new company, when one of the partners suddenly became seriously ill, and the project had to be given up. The bankers were

much disappointed. It occurred to them to take the place of the other contractor; and, Lacy's character being known to them, they made him a fresh proposal. He was to undertake the negotiation, to get Fleetwood to accept an annuity of £600, and also induce Mr. More not to press for his mortgage. If he succeeded in these two matters, they would find the money to pay off all other charges, allow Lacy's contribution to "stand out," and be gradually discharged by his proportion of the profits. Lacy succeeded in his negotiation. Fleetwood, racked with gout, and worn out with excess, was glad to accept such handsome terms, and retired to France, where he closed his strange career. Drury Lane once more passed to new proprietors. *

During this time Garrick's relations with Mrs. Woffington had continued, but with a fitfulness that was characteristic on her side. They still met; and we have a glimpse of them in the London suburbs, which has a certain dramatic air, only a little before the Scotch rebellion.

She was then living at Teddington. Mr. Sheridan,

* The accounts of the patent and its shares are very much confused. Neither Victor nor Geneste notices what was done with Giffard's share. I believe he was represented by the annuity of 300*l.* paid to a Mr. Cawthorpe. Victor is wrong also as to the price paid. It was 13,750*l.*, not 3,500*l.* The pedigree of the "licence" thus disposed of would seem to be as follows:—Starting with the year 1711, it was shared between Colley Cibber, Wilks, Collier and Dogget. In 1714, Booth, the actor, was taken in, under a new licence granted to Steele. A fresh patent was granted in 1731. In 1732, came the amateur young manager, Highmore, who purchased the whole of Cibber's share, and one-half of Booth's for the sum of 5,500*l.*, an enormous price, considering the decay of the property. Later, in 1733, Giffard purchased Booth's remaining half; and at Highmore's break-up, the proprietors of the patent were Highmore, representing one-half, and the widow of Wilks, and Giffard, who held the other. Fleetwood then appeared and purchased, for little more than the unlucky Highmore had given for his part, Highmore's and Mrs. Wilks's share. The bankers paid only 3,200*l.* for their share.

who had met both her and Garrick in Dublin, was staying at Kingston, where he kept open house, and dispensed Irish hospitality, and his influence was said to have seriously altered her style in tragedy, giving it something of the French stiffness. She amused herself with making fools of old men, like Cibber and Owen Swiney, having them dangling after her, the wits said, like the elders after Susanna. There was a curious circle at this Kingston villa: made up principally of jovial students and professors, of the delightful Mrs. Woffington herself, and Garrick, who, it was given out, was sighing to be reconciled to his former "charmer." To this house came also a Mrs. Bellamy, with her pretty daughter; and a sister of Woffington's, Miss Polly Woffington, whom the Trinity College gentlemen discovered had great gifts for the stage. It was once determined to get up a private play to make trial of these, and the parts were cast in a moment. Mr. Garrick took *Orestes*; the pretty Miss Bellamy, who had not as yet gone on the stage, *Andromache*; *Hermione* fell to Miss Polly; and *Pyrrhus* to Mr. Sullivan, "Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin." All the neighbours of fashion were invited, including "Sir William Young," who was loud in praise of Miss Bellamy, though Miss Polly Woffington much excelled her in beauty. Mr. Garrick, also, pronounced that Miss Bellamy was more in earnest. The whole must have been a curious and characteristic scene—the fashionables of Kingston sitting round—the lively Woffington and the "great Garrick" and Mr. Sullivan, Fellow of Trinity College, declaiming away against each other.*

* Bellamy's Memoirs.

She was indeed one of the pillars of the theatre, and one night, and that not on a benefit night, when such compliments are usual, she could show her true devotion to the interest of a play by taking a mean part in "The Provoked Wife," and allowing Mrs. Cibber to play *Lady Brute*. Thus was given a perfect cast. But her admirer sought in vain for such principle in another direction. "Colonel Cæsar, of the Guards," Lord Darnley, and other admirers began to crowd on the scene. Others, also, looking on, saw this fickleness in the lady, and were concerned for their friend Garrick; and Lord Rochford told him very plainly that he had small confidence in "Woff's" attachment, who "could wean herself much easier than you can, or I have no skill in woman's flesh." Gallants of the class of Hanbury Williams were growing more pressing in their devotion. It is plain that the volatile creature was making efforts to maintain some show of constancy to her lover, and it is certain that he had engaged solemnly to marry her.* It was later to come so near, that he had brought home the wedding-ring, and tried it on.† With so respectable an alliance in view, and possibly with some sincere attachment to

* Miss Polly Woffington did better than going on the stage. She married the nephew of Lord Cholmondely, who was greatly outraged by the degrading alliance, but on meeting Mrs. Woffington later, owned that *she* had reconciled him to the match. Her reply showed the spirit, as well as the good heart of the actress. "My lord," she said, coldly, "I have much more reason to be offended with it than you, for before I had but one beggar to maintain, now I have two." She for years supported this younger sister, sent her to a convent in France to be educated, and married her to the Hon. and Rev. Mr. Cholmondely. She became "a very airy lady," according to Johnson. It is amusing to see how the heralds respectfully put her father, the Dublin mason, down as "Arthur Woffington, Esquire;" and her children married into the good houses of Townsend in England, and of Bellingham in Ireland.

† Murphy vouches for this story, and was assured of its truth on many occasions by the actress. It is quite plain that Garrick was looking forward to a marriage.

the actor, it is not surprising she should have made some attempts at steadiness, though attended with occasional lapses, for which the lover could have indulgence.* This is shown by some lines of reproach addressed to her by Williams only the year before, and which describes the situation, and her character very fairly; and shows that some struggle was going on. It is curious that they should be in the same injured tone as Garrick's were to be in the year following—complaining of the lady's fickleness, now growing all but constitutional.

TO MRS. WOFFINGTON: JULY, 1744.

In imitation of
" Ulla si juris tibi pejurati
Pœna, Barine, nocuisset unquam."—HOR.

" If Heav'n upon thy perjured head
Had the least mark of vengeance shed,
For all thy hate to truth;
Had e'en diminish'd any grace,
Lit up one pimple in thy face,
Or rotted but one tooth,

" I would believe its powers: but you,
More fair, as still more faithless, grew,
Charms flow from perjuries;
The more you cheat, we trust the more,
Each jilting tear's a fruitful shower
That makes fresh beauties rise.

" See all our youth confess thy power;
They but behold thee and adore,
And press to drag thy chain;
And though we swear and brag we're free,
Repentant Darnley longs like me
To be thy slave again."

* Macklin used to tell vulgar stories of Garrick's approving of these irregularities, and favouring the addresses of Lord Darnley. Such conduct is utterly inconsistent with Garrick's character, and with the bitter, savage expostulation on her perfidy he was to make later.—See this "good story," in Kirkman's Macklin, p. 117.

The Lord Darnley who longed to be her slave again, had obtained a promise from her that she would never see the actor, when he himself was obliged to leave town. He had her watched, and taxed her with breaking this promise. She denied it, and said she had not seen Garrick for an age. The nobleman said he could prove she had, and on that morning. The baffled actress answered with a spirit, that showed affection, as well as readiness: "Well, and is not that an age?" It was this genuineness that was her charm: and these little flashes of nature were to hold her lover undecided a little longer. This popular account, which has passed through all the memoirs, represents him as a knowing, sharp fellow, anxious to be free from a promise highly inconvenient, now that he was rising so high in the world: and Macklin would give her version, of how "shabbily" he had withdrawn. He told her that he had lain tossing all the night, thinking of this wretched marriage—that it was a foolish thing for both, who might do better in separate lines, and that, in short, he had worn the shirt of Dejanira. "Then throw it off at once, sir," said she, in her shrill, inharmonious voice. "From this moment I have done with you." The next morning she sent back all his presents, and a letter of dismissal. He did the same, with the exception of a pair of diamond buckles of some value. She waited for a month, thinking they had been forgotten, and then wrote for them; but Garrick begged "he might be allowed to keep them, as a memorial of their old friendship, and of many happy hours," &c. This was told with much chuckling by Macklin, as an illustration of "the little fellow's" meanness and avarice; though

there is no reason why it should not be accepted in its literal sense, as a proof of feeling or affection.*

But we have fortunately the means of discovering what was his version. I find among his papers a long "copy of verses" full of bitter reproach, significant of anger and deep jealousy, holding up to her astonished eyes a fierce and caustic picture of all her infidelities, and warning her how it must surely end. They were headed "Epistle to Mrs. Woffington, sent to her in June, 1745." He still calls her Sylvia, as though she was always present to him in that first loved character, and they show that all was at an end between them, but certainly through no fault on his side.†

"Sylvia, to you I dedicate my lays,
No flattering bard, or love-sick youth;
Regardless of your censure or your praise,
I come to expose the naked truth.

"To you, and to your heart my muse appeals,
And if not tainted to the core,
Freely confess the actions she reveals,
Which all your various arts explore.

"And now my muse in greatest order move,
In just succession *facts impart;*
Pursue the rovings of a woman's love,
And sing the progress of her heart.

"From *forty-two* I take my present date,
When Darnley's gold seemed void of charms,
And driven by whims, inconstancy, or fate,
You flew from him to Garrick's arms.

"*No mercenary views* possessed your mind.
'Tis love! cried out the public voice!
To Sylvia's virtues we have all been blind:
By fate a mistress, not by choice.

"But soon these pæans cease—'twas worse and worse,
(For fame will err and make mistakes)
She revels with the man she ought to curse,
And riots *with her quondam rakes.*

* Accuracy is not a characteristic of green-room stories. The value of the buckles may have been exaggerated, and it was not a very costly souvenir to retain after such a friendship.

† From the Hill MS.

"*I know your sophistry, I know your art,*
Which all your dupes and fools control;
Yourself you give without your heart,—
All may share THAT, *but not your soul.*

"But now her thirst of gold must be allayed,
The want of show her pride alarms;
It must, it shall be gratified, she said,
Then plunged in hateful W—ll—ms' arms.

"Oh, peer!* (whose acts shall down time's torrents roll,)
If thus you doat, thus love the dame,
In nuptial bonds unite her to your soul,
And thus at once complete your fame."

He then, rather pathetically, warns her of the decay, which such a course of life must entail, even in her looks, and bids her look in her glass:

"Peggy! behold that harassed, worn-out field,
Which once was verdant, fruitful, gay—"

and which is now "barren" and "cracked;" "and," he adds,

"Though you feign the joys you cannot feel,
Yet even mechanic passions wear.

"Your spring is past, but not your summer gone,
O reap before the sun descends!
When autumn's fall or winter's blasts come on,
Farewell to lovers, flatterers, and friends.

"But now, advice apart, the theme pursue,
Follow the damsel in her wild career!
Say what gallants, what keepers are in view—
Behold the colonel in the rear!

"Some say you're proud, coquettish, cruel, vain.
Unjust! She never wounds but cures;
So pitiful to every lying swain,—
Flatter or pay, the nymph is yours."

These bitter home truths were the true cause of their final breaking off. He had hoped that she might be fit to take her place as the wife of an honest man who loved her. This was an infatuation in the young actor; still, looking at the existing state of morals about

* Lord Darnley.

him, such views were almost creditable to him. But the abandoned creature could not be fixed: one lover was preferred after the other, and Garrick, dismissing all hopes of a reformation, finally determined to break off with her. His constancy and attachment had no doubt amused the town and his friends, and this rupture, which was notorious, furnished no less abundant talk and diversion. Caricatures were published, and verses were written. A hundred stories went about, as to the promise of marriage, and of the gentleman being tired of his engagement. The actress was piqued and angry, and gave friends her version, coloured, no doubt, by a coarse, angry woman's view of the matter, and diligently retailed by her friend Macklin. It was, indeed, the happiest thing in the world for Garrick. Such an alliance would have shipwrecked his whole life —made his home wretched. He was saved just in time to meet with the rarest and best of women—one that was elegant in mind and person, the most faithful and admirable of wives. "Peg" Woffington perhaps laughed the loudest at this desertion. But she felt it. Still there was a fifteen years' brilliant career before her, more theatrical triumphs, membership of the Beef Steak Club, and "four thousand pounds brought to the theatre," for four old stock plays. Her admirers clustered fast, one of whom was old Owen Swiney, whom she, later, turned to excellent profit. She passed over to Paris, where she picked up hints from Dusmenil.* And long after the "Hon. and Rev.

* Fitzpatrick wrote from Paris in 1748,—"There are a great many English now here; and, among the rest, Mrs. Woffington is now here with Swiney. I have often the pleasure of conversing with her at the playhouse, where we sit in judgment on the players. We have agreed that in comedy they far surpass the English players, but in tragedy they fall short of them." At a

Robert Cholmondely,"—the husband of Miss Polly Woffington—was not ashamed to draw some profit from Mr. Garrick's old intimacy with the actress, and asked, and received, loans of money. Thus ended this episode.

Lacy, now in command at the theatre, was not on harmonious terms with his leading actor. He had also quarrelled with Mrs. Cibber; and Garrick having been obliged to give up playing for the present from illness, was only thinking of restoring his strength by easy expeditions to the country. What Mrs. Cibber was eager for was a joint adventure—that with Quin and Garrick she should purchase the Drury Lane patent, which it was very probable Lacy's growing embarrassments would send into the market once more. She tried all sorts of pleasant blandishments, now asking Garrick to her place at Woodhay, now planning a meeting in town, now flattering him, and now frightening him by the news that Lacy was determined to shut them both out of the theatre for the new season. But Garrick was too cautious to join in such triumvirate.

This was in October, and he was still only recovering slowly from his illness, under the care of Thompson, a well-known physician of the day. But before arranging the details of this new scheme, he went down to Buxton Hall, and later to Bath with his friend, Colonel Wyndham, and there received a proposal which changed everything.

public fencing match, she was so attracted by a handsome fencing master, that she went over and pinned a favour on his breast, and later travelled home with him in the same chaise. There is a picture of old Swiney, her other admirer, by Vanloo. In dress and air, it is very like the well-known one of Rubens.

CHAPTER VII.

SECOND DUBLIN SEASON,

1745—1746.

GARRICK was at Bath, enjoying that pleasant watering-place, when the post brought him a letter from Sheridan, then in Ireland. It contained a singular and characteristic proposal. Having heard, he said, that Garrick wished to pay a second visit to Dublin, he wrote to inform him that he was now "sole manager of the Irish stage," and that he might depend on receiving "every advantage and encouragement that he could in reason expect." The basis of their agreement was to be a division of profits; but he frankly warned him to expect nothing from friendship, or, indeed, anything more than an actor could in strict right require. No wonder that Garrick, on this almost hostile invitation, should turn to his friend and say: "This is the oddest letter I ever received in the whole course of my life." Colonel Wyndham replied, that it might be odd, but that it was still fair, open, and honest, and advised him to accept the proposal. Uncertain as to his plans—for the London theatres were still in sad confusion—and inclining himself in that direction, he took his friend's advice, and closed with Sheridan.

He went down first to Lichfield, it may be supposed to see his family, and he determined to go on from

thence to Ireland, without returning to London. This resolution seemed to hurt his friend, Mrs. Cibber, who thought it against his interests, and a little against the interests of their friendship. With a break-up in theatrical matters so imminent, it was well to be on the spot. His "little wife" would have been glad to have had but two or three hours' conversation with him before he left. Garrick, we may suspect, was growing a little fatigued with this "friendship;" and wrote back some routine compliments, saying that she was of the number he could not wish to take leave of. He added that he also wanted sadly to make love to her—on the stage. To which she replied pleasantly, that she could assure him very seriously, that unless he made more love than he did the past year, she would never act with him. All the last winter she had had "wretched lovers. I desire you always to be my lover upon the stage, and my friend off it" —an intimation that could not be more playfully or delicately conveyed. Garrick then promised to write to her from Ireland, and set off about the middle of November. *

In the interval between Garrick's first and second visit, the state of the Irish theatres had become deplorable, and sad disorders had grown up. A sort of license among the audience had been encouraged by the management, and by allowing the public to behave as they pleased, all check of respect and decency had gradually been lost. The boxes and pit were deserted, while the stage became crowded with gratuitous visitors, and the gallery was the scene of brawls

* Murphy says September.

and riots between "the footmen" and the mob. In this demoralization Sheridan had been invited to become manager, and attempt a reform; and having remodelled scenery and scenic effects, and brought about something like order, determined to play boldly, and as the first card to play, thought of engaging Garrick.

He presently came to London, to get together a band of recruits, and at last started for Chester, with a curious party: Miss Bellamy, the well-known "George-Anne," an ambitious young girl, who had just begun her career as an actress; her mother, and Lacy, the manager of Drury Lane, who was going over to pick up recruits for his new season—who was furious at his treatment by Garrick, and wrote very bitterly of him to the Irish proprietors. There were also Mrs. Elmy, another actress, and a Mr. Morgan, who was an admirer of the latter, but in the last stage of consumption. Mrs. Elmy, who affected to be a humourist, enlivened the journey by constant disputes with Miss Bellamy. At Parkgate they found the wind contrary, and the manager, impatient to get to his theatre, left them there, and posted on to Holyhead.

On a Sunday morning, November 24th, Mr. Garrick arrived in Dublin, when he and Sheridan met. Garrick was anxious to have a certain sum in place of sharing profits. There was near being a fresh quarrel, which was accommodated by Sheridan's ungraciously taking out his watch, and giving the other a few minutes for an answer. This did not promise much harmony. The next day the news was in all the papers. The season did not open for a fortnight; meantime the capital had plenty of attractions to fill up the popular actor's time. It was during this season

that he formed a crowd of acquaintances, among the highest in the country, whose friendship he retained during all his life. Lord Forbes was living in St. Stephen's Green, Lady Doneraile in Dawson Street. Bishop Clayton, Mrs. Delany's friend, also in "The Green;" besides Lords Bellamont, Milltown, and many more. One of the leading persons of fashion was Colonel Butler, and his wife, "the Honourable Mrs. Butler," whose house was "frequented by most of the nobility." They had a handsome seat on the sea-coast at Clontarf, and with this family the English actor became very intimate.

The famous Lord Chesterfield was now Viceroy. He had laid himself out to conciliate the people by something like impartial government, and to dazzle the capital by a series of brilliant shows. The Irish Court seemed to glitter afresh. New amusements were devised; new rooms were built at the Castle, designed by the elegant taste of the Lord Lieutenant himself, where festivals are still given on drawing-room nights. Here took place the *fête*, when the "long gallery" was laid out with a series of what seemed little shops, where sweetmeats and rare wines were served. This was lit up by transparencies, as by moonlight; the guests walked to the sound of soft and exquisite music, coming from unseen flutes and other instruments; and, at each end, fountains of lavender water played abundantly.

The theatre was at last ready to open. It was a surprisingly good company. One of its elements of strength was to be a new actor; who, like Powell, later, had stepped from the warehouse to the stage. Mr. Garrick coming over as a "star," perhaps

made small account of this local luminary, who was now modestly studying *Castalio* to play to Miss Bellamy in "The Orphan." He did not dream of what perilous rivalry he was to find, in the noble figure, handsome face, and tender voice—a dangerous combination of advantages—of the *ci-devant* Dublin silversmith. Barry had made "some figure on the stage" the preceding winter, but great as had been his success on Irish boards, that splendid presence, and silvery voice, full of deep pathos, were later to ravish all London.

As Garrick had taken his farewell in "Hamlet," he was now to make his re-appearance in the same play. With Sheridan he was on cordial terms, and they had agreed to play in Shakspeare alternately. Indeed, at every period, whether we look back to the beginning or to the end of his career, to his apprenticeship, or to his full maturity, we find the same calm, temperate, and modest tone of mind, and the same generous self-abnegation. In the midst of all the complaints and jealousies of the players, their absurd sensitiveness and false grievances, which were ridiculously mean and troublesome, we shall see him calm, good-tempered, full of a manly dignity, kind, forbearing, making a gracious allowance, and almost humouring the pettish comedians, who were worrying him with their broils and fancied outrages. No wonder that with such a nature he won respect, fast friendship and admiration, besides fame.

On the night of the 9th of December, the theatre opened "with *éclat*." The manager had determined to carry out all his reforms strictly, and by advertisement the public were warned that no one would be admitted

behind the scenes, excepting those who had box tickets. The new rule, made lately, admitted ladies to the pit, as was the custom in London. The quarrelsome "footmen," who waited for their families in the galleries, were not to be admitted there, without a ticket from the boxkeeper; and their habit of waiting in the "box-room," with flaring torches to light their master's "chairs" home, was found disagreeable for the ladies, and was required to be given up.* Mrs. Storer was the *Ophelia*, and, after the tragedy, sang, while a Madame Moreau danced. Thus the entertainment comprised music, dancing, and singing.

A fortnight later, Garrick was to have had his first benefit, but the "Messiah," being fixed for that night at the "Music Hall," for the benefit of "the poor prisoners," he good-naturedly deferred his night till Friday, when he appeared in *Bayes*. The Viceroy was present, and also "one of the most polite and crowded audiences that hath ever been seen at *any play*"—a pardonable exaggeration. Vast numbers had to be turned away for want of room, and the block on the little "Blind Key" was tremendous. It was after this occasion that the play-goers were entreated by public advertisement to keep distinct route in coming and in going, with their chairs and coaches, which got sadly confused "in so narrow a place," and that "these rules may be *punctually* obeyed," oddly added the notice, guards were placed to insure the regula-

* The chief prices were 5*s.* 5*d.*, the "lattises," 4*s.* 4*d.*; the "pit," 3*s.* 3*d.*; "gallery," 2*s.* 2*d.*; and the "upper gallery," 1*s.* 1*d.* Tickets were to be had at Mr. Neil's, in Abbey Street, and at the bar of the Merchants' Coffee-house. The performances were to commence at half-past six, a later hour than in London, for even at this time they had the habit of dining so late as five o'clock. The doors were open at four o'clock.

tions being carried out. But the Viceroy's behaviour to Mr. Garrick was extraordinary. The actor and manager had both attended him to his box, carrying wax lights and walking backwards, a custom that still obtains in Dublin on benefit nights. To Sheridan he spoke kindly, but took not the slightest notice of the other, and did not even return his salute. This was characteristic of the cold-hearted professor of the Graces. He affected to disparage Garrick's view of the part of *Bayes*. He held that it was intended for a serious and solemn character, and that it was quite misconceived. Generally, too, he objected to the actor's comedy powers; though later he went so far as to say publicly that he was not only the best tragedian of the day, but the best that had ever been in the world. This was high praise: but it was delayed till he was removed from all possibility of contact with the player. Yet he had often met him at dinner in London. Certainly during the engagement the Vice-regal box was rarely empty.

Bayes was announced as his last appearance before the holidays. He must have spent them pleasantly. He knew Lord Mountjoy, and "old Dr. Barry," and Mr. Tighe, of the Castle. He talked "fine things" to them of Mrs. Cibber, who was affectionately thought of. He was really anxious that she should come over and join their company, but she was afraid of the sea.

It must have been a rare treat indeed, attending Smock Alley Theatre, and seeing plays so finely cast, with four players all young, spirited, clever, and good-looking. These, after all, are precious stage gifts. On the first day of the new year they began with

the "Fair Penitent" "by command," when Sheridan took *Horatio*, Garrick *Lothario*, and the handsome Barry *Altamont*—a small part, which he made so graceful that it became as important as the other two. No wonder that the Dean of Down's wife should have thought him in this very character, "the handsomest man and finest figure altogether that ever paced upon the stage." This fascinating actor was making fresh progress every day. Play-goers and writers seem at a loss for words to describe the charm; but setting all the portraits side by side—Churchill's, Davies', and many more—the features resolve themselves in a noble and graceful figure, a face of calm, manly beauty, an expression of soft interest and tenderness, and a touching and musical voice. These are gifts that would carry any actor through, and most likely they carried him over the mannerisms hinted at by the bitter Churchill, and the affectation, with which, the satirist unfairly says, "he conned his passions as he conned his part." The ladies were his warm patrons, whom "he charmed by the soft melody of his love complaints and the noble ardour of his courtship." Lord Chesterfield also admired his figure, but forecasted his sudden withdrawal from the stage, carried off by some smitten rich widow.

Then followed "Macbeth" (by command), "The Orphan," "King Lear and his THREE DAUGHTERS," "The Recruiting Officer;" and for Garrick's second benefit, "The Provoked Wife" with the farce of "The Schoolboy." Later came *Archer*, in "The Beaux' Stratagem." But the footmen had again grown disorderly, and the manager had to address the public on the abuse; threatening to shut up the gallery altogether. He offered them one last chance of trial on

Garrick's benefit night, when if the noise was repeated the gallery was to be closed, and servants were "never to be admitted to the theatre again." It was odd that this very class were later to break out at Edinburgh in a riot of very much the same kind.

The English actor once more read in his newspaper complimentary verses from his Dublin admirers. One took the shape of an epigram—

> "Hearing that aged crows are learned and wise,
> I ask'd the ancient, famous one, at Warwick,
> Which of all actors best deserved the prize?
> *Roscius* it could not say, but *Garrick—Garrick.*"*

All this time young Miss Bellamy was making progress, and combining the pleasures of Dublin society with her professional duties. The sprightly and ambitious girl had boldly made terms with the manager in London that she was to be allowed to commence as *Constance* in "King John," a part in which she had a girlish ambition to take the audience by

* On another day he read other lines, not less complimentary—

> "O, thou, the phœnix of the age,
> The prop and glory of the stage—
> Thou Proteus, that with so much ease
> Assum'st what character you please.
> * * * *
> Like Pallas, from the brain of Jove
> Perfect you came—*nor can improve.*
> * * * *
> How did my swelling bosom glow,
> To see thy *Lear's* majestic woe;
> And yet, O, strange! on the same night,
> How did thy *Lying Sharp* delight."

Then in reference to his playing *Richard III.*—

> "I scarce can think thou play'st a part,
> And I could stab thee to the heart.
> 'Tis here thy genius is admired,
> 'Tis here thou seem'st almost inspired;
> Else how could thy sweet nature bear
> T' assume the murdering villain's air?"

storm. She was naturally encouraged to it by the great applause she received, for she was appearing nearly every night, in all sorts of characters—was going to parties at Mrs. Butler's and other fashionable houses, and hardly found time for sleep. She was very pretty; and it gives us a curious hint of the tone of the Dublin drawing-rooms and the overpowering rage for the drama, when Lord Tyrawley's natural daughter was "chaperoned" by Mrs. O'Hara, Lord Tyrawley's sister, as her niece, and Mr. Garrick, the young "player," was welcomed everywhere.

"King John" was much talked of, and was said by the papers to be in rehearsal. There was great curiosity abroad to see it, as it had not been played "in this kingdom" for many years; but there was a serious commotion going on in the green-room. Garrick and the manager were to play the *King* and the *Bastard* alternately. They were to be the pillars of the play; and Mr. Garrick had privately pitched on Miss Bellamy for a "hose and trunks" part, *Prince Arthur*, for which his good sense had told him, a pretty and untrained young actress would be far better adapted than for *Constance*. The more experienced Mrs. Furnival was intended for that part. There was, besides, another objection to Miss Bellamy appearing as *Constance;* the part of *Prince Arthur* would then have to be done by a lady whose misfortune it was to be "hard-featured" and a little too mature for a boy-character. These objections, like all objections made by Garrick in his life, were utterly unselfish, and marked by reason and good sense, and regard to the interest of the play. Sheridan stood by his promise, and supported the young actress' claim; but Garrick was firm, and prevailed.

The retaliation she took was characteristic, almost amusing. With true green-room spite and girlish fury she flew to her friend, "Mrs. Butler, of St. Stephen's Green," told the story of her wrongs and persecution, and actually engaged her in a very vindictive scheme of revenge. Ladies of fashion in Dublin had a great deal of power in reference to the theatre. From the Viceroy downwards, much depended on patronage. Leading actors attached themselves to some lady of quality, who took on herself the management of his "night," canvassed her acquaintances, disposed of tickets, and received the fashionable part of the audience in the box-room, as though she were the hostess. The night was called, not the actor's but "Lady ——'s night," and there was a sort of emulation among them, to have their particular "night" successful. The silver-tongued Barry had many such nights, and was at no loss for patronesses.

Mrs. Butler, who led "the genteel world" in Dublin, took up the cause of her *protégé*, and when the play was announced for the 5th of February, actually went round diligently to all her friends, and made it a point that they should stay away. One of the fashionable levers she wielded was a series of very select balls, which insured the homage and services of a *clientèle* of young ladies, eager for invitations, and she insisted they should exert themselves to prevent all their friends attending the first representation of "King John." The spiteful little scheme succeeded perfectly. On that night, with Sheridan as the *Bastard*, and Roscius as the *King*, the house was miserably thin, and the receipts did not reach £40.

The malicious young actress had triumphed thus

far. She often told how she had given "the immortal" Roscius his first humiliation." She had made him "severely repent" of preferring the regular tragedy queen, Mrs. Furnival, "to her little self." Those who have studied Roscius' life and character, will know that no such feelings were in his heart. He was more amused than angry, and yielded. He bore her not the least malice for so unworthy a trick, and treated the wilful actress with a charming good-humour and forgiveness, that shows us his true character admirably. He was magnaminous enough to have the play put up once more, with Miss Bellamy in her coveted part of *Constance.*

The town, meanwhile, had got hold of the story, and was vastly entertained. This time it was Garrick's turn to play the *Bastard.* Mrs. Butler, no doubt, set her influence at work in the genteel world—but in an opposite direction—and the result was an overflowing audience, with crowds turned away from the doors. The actress affected to recognise in the boisterous applause of the audience, a recognition of the victory she had gained. But the wilful girl was not yet satisfied. She took all this good-humoured forbearance for indifference or, perhaps, enmity.

"Tancred" then followed, and "Othello,"—with Garrick and Sheridan taking *Iago* and *Othello* alternately. This variety and trial of skill would have delighted the Dublin galleries; but it is plain that by this time, the superior ability and popularity of his rival had excited some jealousy in the manager, who had now become hostile both to Garrick and to Barry. The feeling between the two latter was most cordial and honourable. Barry's benefit followed, "The Distressed

Mother," with Garrick's first attempt at *Orestes*. Then came "Lear," "being the last time of Mr. Garrick's playing under his present agreement"—for the success had been so great, that a new engagement was entered into. On the 19th of March, he attempted *Sir Harry Wildair*, in which it was confessed, that he did not approach the saucy Woffington, and on the 3rd of April, played for the benefit of a dramatic author. It was also given out that "Mr. Garrick would play two or three times more before leaving the kingdom."

April the 15th was a high festival, being the birthday of His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, which, like all loyal occasions, was kept with the extravagant and almost theatrical exuberance, which was *de rigueur* in Dublin—"with great demonstrations of joy," being the usual expression. "Orestes" was the play for this night, and Lord Chesterfield and his court, and "a numerous and polite audience" were present. Sheridan spoke a prologue; but the event of the night was the epilogue, written by "The Farmer"—a sobriquet for "the ingenious Mr. Brooke"—and spoken by Mr. Garrick. The enthusiasm of the occasion, and the correct elocution of the speaker, may have diverted attention from the graver burlesque of this production. Some of the verses ran:—

> "'Tis not a birth to titles, pomp, and state,
> That forms the brave or constitutes the great;
> To be the son of GEORGE's just renown,
> *And brother to the heir of Britain's crown.*"

The bathos of the last line reads like burlesque. The Viceroy was about leaving for England, and Roscius had to deliver some passages of complimentary regret:

> "Then seize, Hibernia, seize the present joy,
> This day is sacred to the martial boy;

The morrow shall a different strain require,
When with thy STANHOPE all delights retire;
And (a long Polar night of grief begun),
Thy soul shall sigh for its returning SUN."*

An ordinary play had been chosen for Garrick's last benefit and last appearance, but as there was a desire to see him in one more new character, "Jane Shore" was underlined, and Miss Bellamy found in this an opportunity for her malice, or her petulance. She was really gaining favour with the audience by a mixture of impudence and spirit, which is often popular in a theatre, as well as by the way she had resented a freedom Mr. Leger had attempted, giving him a sound slap on the face in full view of the audience—which caused Lord Chesterfield to applaud publicly, and send his aide, Major Macartney, to require a public apology.

Garrick had wished that she should play *Jane Shore* for him, which she refused—maliciously giving him back his own pretext, in the case of *Constance*—her excessive youth. He then wrote her a sort of playful note, in which he said that if she would oblige him in this matter, he would write her "a goody, goody epilogue, which, with the help of her eyes, should do more mischief than ever the flesh or the devil had done, since the world began." And this effusion he directed burlesquely, "To my Soul's Idol," the "beautiful

* Garrick was fond of telling a story about "the widow Madden," a Catholic lady of great beauty, who had appeared at the Castle on King William's birthday, with an orange favour in her dress. The Lord-Lieutenant made the well-known epigram—

"Little Tory, where's the jest,
To wear that orange in your breast,
When that same breast, betraying shows,
The whiteness of the rebel rose."

Murphy, as usual, minutely astray, attributes it to "a Mr. Arthur St. Leger, who was killed at Fontenoy."

Ophelia!" This was given to his servant to deliver, to be handed over to a messenger, who was utterly mystified by the address, and took it to his master. He turned out to be a newspaper proprietor, and, Miss Bellamy says, promptly inserted it in his journal. "The writer of this high-flown epistle," she adds, "was not a little mortified at its publication."

The way in which the actress reflected on this incident, even many years after, is a curious specimen of blindness and ignorance. "That such *silly goody, goody* stuff as his epistle contained, should ever fall from the *immortal* pen of the immortal Roscius, even in the most careless and relaxed moment, was strange, was passing strange." It almost seems as though the charms of Miss Bellamy had failed to attract the admirer of Mrs. Cibber and Mrs. Woffington, and the burlesque rhapsodies of the great actor piqued her, because it showed he might address her as he would a school-girl.

"Jane Shore" was then played, but the important feature of the night, instead of the "goody, goody epilogue," was a farewell address to the town by Mr. Garrick. It has not been reported. It was his last appearance on the stage in Ireland, but he remained some days more. The popular Viceroy had sailed on the Wednesday before this last performance. This departure could not affect Mr. Garrick. It was, indeed, said, that with all this ostentatious patronage, he had never paid the actor, whom all the country were honouring, the slightest personal attention. He affected, as we have seen, to think poorly of his comedy powers, and perhaps did not dream he would hereafter reach to such high social respect and position. He

would then have made advances to him, as he had done to Johnson, and "incumbered him with help." His last words to Sheridan were the most earnest encouragement in his scheme of an "oratorical academy" in London, with an appearance of warm personal interest in the project, that might reasonably be taken for a promise of support. But when the academy was started, and the actor waited on the patron, only a guinea was put into his hand!.

It was rumoured that the amount of money, divided between Garrick and Sheridan, was something incredible. The former had indeed full reason to be satisfied with his visit—though it is quite plain that the old estrangement had again set in. The manager resented the superior popularity of the younger actor, and still more the mortification of thin houses on nights, when he was dependent on his own resources. The fault can scarcely be laid to Garrick's side; for with Barry, far more dangerous as a rival, a sort of warm friendship sprung up; and, with him also, it seems that Sheridan had fallen out.

The day before Garrick embarked, he galloped down to Clontarf to say good-bye to his fashionable friends the Butlers. He found the whole family walking on the terrace with his girlish enemy. Of Mrs. Butler he was a great favourite, but on this occasion she could not resist a sprightly practical joke. She went away suddenly, and came back with a sealed packet, which she put into his hand, with a little solemnity, and a declaration as solemn. "I here present you, Mr. Garrick, with something more valuable than life. In it you will read my sentiments; but I strictly enjoin you not to open it till you have passed the Hill of

Howth." Everyone was a little surprised, "especially," remarks Miss Bellamy, "Colonel Butler's chaplain," who was of the party. The same malicious observer imagined that Mr. Garrick took the packet with a significant complacency, as though he guessed it would contain some very flattering confession; for he was "as conscious of possessing nature's liberal gifts as any man breathing."

He dined there, and went away in the evening; then the "Hon. Mrs. Butler" told the company the joke. The packet contained "Wesley's Hymns" and "Swift's Sermon on the Trinity." He was so chagrined, says his young enemy, and mortified, that he tossed them both over the vessel's side. But how did Miss Bellamy learn this exhibition of wounded *amour propre?* The malevolent and persecuting Garrick told her the story himself in London—where, too, he had given her an engagement at his theatre! Thus ended the second great Garrick season, which had lasted some six months, and was long remembered. He was never to see that pleasant city again, though his heart often turned to it.

No wonder Garrick spoke almost with affection of this visit, and of his "love to Ireland." No wonder that while waiting till the chaos at the London theatres should settle into some defined shape, he should think of returning again in the following year. He had made abundance of friends, and mixed in the best circles, and had "drank" and been merry with the Irish gentlemen.*

As soon as he was gone, everything fell into con-

* In one of his letters to Mrs. Cibber he hinted at these carouses. The people of Cork were much offended that he did not visit them.

fusion. Salaries were stopped, and the silversmith's graceful son could not get a penny of what was due to him. Garrick, however, had stood his friend, and lent him money; further, with a wonderful absence of all mean jealousy, was anxious to keep a place for him in arrangements he was now meditating, and eager to introduce him to a London audience. Acting no doubt on Garrick's advice, he had declined Lacy's proposal for an engagement.* "When I consider you as my guardian angel," wrote Barry to him, "I can resist any temptation. . . . . You have already made me happy by your friendship; and it shall be the business and pleasure of my life to endeavour to deserve it, and I would willingly make it the basis of my future fortune." The business, and perhaps pleasure, of his life was to become a fretful and spiteful rivalry, and a harassing of his friend with complaints and ungenerous suspicions.

* Davies says Lacy saw his *Othello*, and "hired" him at a very considerable income. Barry was not "hired" till long after.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE VIOLETTE.

1746—47.

Mr. Garrick had now arrived in town. He had travelled back with Victor, a useful official at the Irish theatres, and who knew most of the actors on both sides of the water. They reached London on the tenth of May, Garrick bringing with him six hundred pounds, the spoil and profit of his campaign. He found the air thick with clouds. Everything dramatic was in confusion and disorder. His clear business eye saw that a general break-up must soon come, and that his post clearly was to stand aside, look on, and bide his time.

His friend Mrs. Cibber had kept him *au courant* with the state of the London stage. Nothing could be more deplorable. One of the reasons for this general decay was the excitement of the Scotch rebellion, which affected pleasure and business impartially. The actors were starving. The theatres were reduced to the most unhappy condition. The managers took the unworthy course of appealing to the popular prejudices, and inflamed them by the selection of plays likely to stir the vulgar passions of the mob; though the rebellion might interfere with amusement, they knew the chord of bigotry, properly touched, was sure to find a hearty response. The little "theatre in the Hay" had

been opened for opera, with Geminiani's music, and the amateur assistance of Prince Lobkiwitz, and the "Mysterious Chevalier of St. Germain." But the loyalist mob would not tolerate an entertainment supported by Papists and foreigners; and after nine nights the place was shut up "by order." The "Nonjuror" was played very often, and with such profit to the managers that, as the pleasant Mrs. Cibber said, "it would give them a respect for the name, for the rest of their lives." But the topping of all was Lacy's bringing out "Perkin Warbeck, the Popish Impostor," magnificently "mounted;" perhaps the most comic wresting of history to bigotry on record. The audience, however, had the good sense to laugh at "Henry the Seventh," who by a curious anachronism thus was made to represent English Protestantism and freedom. Even with this attraction the affairs of the theatre were in a wretched condition; the actors were on half salaries, and there was often, according to Mrs. Cibber, scarcely fifteen pounds taken of a night.

Almost with delight she was watching the gradual decadence of the Old House. Now, the stage had been "built up" for the accommodation of the crowds who were to rush to see the "Recruiting Officer;" but as no crowd came, Lacy had to shut in the benches with a flat scene. No doubt he knew well the confederacy formed against him. He had tried to detach Mrs. Cibber by fresh and advantageous offers, and when these were declined, went round telling everywhere of the insolence and exorbitance of Garrick and his confederate, who had made such extravagant demands as no house could offer to give. It was said, too, that he and his friends were hatching a pamphlet,

in which the rapacity of the pair were to be properly exposed; and the actress was very eager that this move should be provided against—that, if such did appear, it should be replied to, and Garrick's written decliner of his proposals, really set before the public. Lacy tried advertisements, hinting at the matter in the papers, but finding that they did not pique the public, gave over his plan of a pamphlet attack. She wrote also, that Lacy was setting up one Goodfellow as quite equal in power to the absent actor.

At last, however, this clever lady persuaded him. Before he had left Dublin he had agreed to join with her and Quin, in purchasing the Drury Lane patent, should it come into the market, as indeed it was likely to do. With that wonderful spirit of accommodation which was always his characteristic, he was ready to resign some of his old parts to Quin, study new ones himself, and in case of others, was content to play them alternately. But the theatre was not yet sufficiently embarrassed, and was to struggle on for some time longer.

A dull but handsome Prince of Hesse, who had been on the staff of "the Duke" through the Scotch campaign, had arrived in town, and was the cynosure of the moment. Although it was the second of June, town was full, and the weather agreeable. This was the personage of whom Walpole said he was perhaps reckoned lively enough in his own country, because though he spoke but little, he opened his mouth a good deal. He was showing himself everywhere. All the attractions of London were displayed to him. On the Sunday he dined with the king, who presented him with a splendid sword. On the Monday he went to

Ranelagh, where he supped, and actually went up to the great and famous actor, Mr. Garrick, and spoke to him. People in the country were very anxious to have the exact words used by his Royal Highness. It is curious that, on the following night, he should have been at the opera with his suite, to see a very famous danseuse, after whom all the town was running, and it was remarked that he changed from his own box into the Prince of Wales', to get a better view of the "last dance." This was danced by a lady called the Violette. Thus the future husband and wife received nearly equal honour; and most likely Mr. Garrick, who resorted to places of fashion like Ranelagh, was also present at the opera, to see this homage to one whom he did not think of then as his future partner.

Rich determined to profit by the general rejoicing, and although the season was over, kept his company together for a few nights, in honour of the prince. He secured Garrick for six performances, one of which was his weak part—*Othello.* These performances, however, brought him three hundred pounds, and most likely the patronage of the prince.*

In this tide of success, money, applause, compliments, gaities, and civilities heaped upon him, it is no wonder that he should have been in spirits. He could afford to wait events. He left London, and went down to Cheltenham for a holiday. His letters, at this time, overflow with spirits, and enjoyment, and affection. He enjoyed life there. He was admired by all the ladies. He tore himself from the place with reluctance, as he wrote to his brother, rather strongly,

* He was engaged on June 11th. He played *Lear*, *Hamlet*, *Richard*, *Othello*, *Archer*, and *Macbeth*.

"leaving Elysium to arrive at Hell." The company of that Elysium had been long expecting him. Three young ladies, "most agreeable parties," with whom he had been "very merry and happy last night," had gone away. Another lady had got "rantipole spirits" by drinking the waters. Miss Polly Fletcher, however, down at Lichfield, must not believe her sister if she brings back a story of his having fallen in love with Miss Vernon; for his passion for Miss Polly is still unalterable.*

Then he went down to Lichfield, where he had seen his friend Walmesley, who still called him "dear Davy," and wrote to him from Bath most affectionately. That kind old friend was trying to learn whist, to make himself acceptable at the parties there; and one day, as he was sitting in the coffee house, chatting to Mr. Stanhope, entered Lord Chesterfield, no longer Lord Lieutenant, and began to talk of Mr. Garrick. The old man had great pleasure in writing to "Davy" that his lordship considered him the best tragedian in the world. He then began to dwell on the gifts of Barry, and seemed to hint, a little maliciously, that he would try and advance him as much as he could. Mr. Walmesley, eager for his pupil, hoped his lordship would extend his protection to Garrick also; but the other said carelessly that *he* wanted none. He had clearly some petty spite to the actor, and his patronage of the other was no doubt more a depreciation of Garrick than a substantial assistance to Barry.

But there was a spell drawing Garrick to London—

* Forster MSS.

one, whom he perhaps never dreamed was to be the guardian angel of his life—a beautiful young girl, was then, as we have seen, dancing at the opera. About her there was quite a little history.

Early in the year 1746, only a few weeks before the battle of Culloden, some young and vivacious Scotch gentlemen, who had been studying at a Dutch university, where they left Charles Townshend behind, were embarking at Helvoetsluys, on their way home to their own country. One of these students was the handsome, lively, and not too straight-laced Doctor Carlyle, the clergyman of Inverness, whose memoirs are such agreeable reading. They sailed about eight, of a fine spring morning, and among their fellow-passengers, were two foreigners, with a very handsome young page. This party they assumed to be a Hanoverian baron going up to St. James's with his suite—a sort of traveller met with too frequently on the road to London in those days. Presently the wind began to freshen into a gale—the Scotchmen enjoyed it, but the young page went down to the only berth in the cabin, which had been mysteriously secured for him, and becoming very ill, called out in French to know if there was any danger.

The young student then detected a woman's voice, re-assured her, and he and his friends were very attentive and obliging, in their gay Scotch way. They soon found out that this was a young dancer from Vienna, coming to try the English stage, at the little theatre in "the Hay;" and the supposed Hanoverian baron, hearing the conversation, with a true air of business, begged their patronage for his *protégée*.

Landing at Harwich, they travelled on up to London;

but at Colchester the servants of the hotel suspected the sex of the young page, and began to insult "the foreigners"—for "beggarly foreigners" in those times were fair game for British insult. The young men interfered, stood by the party, and saw that they were civilly treated. The next day they met on the road again, and the Scotch gentlemen made the young lady dine with them. Finally they got to London, and the whole party put up in Friday street. They did not forget their promise of patronage; for shortly after, the young girl made her appearance at the opera, in the Haymarket, and they all repaired to see her. The whole thing seemed to their Scotch minds very unreal and tawdry, but the dancing, which they were perhaps prepared to like, they thought "exquisite."

This young girl who was thus travelling once as a page, was Mademoiselle Violette, the reputed daughter of a respectable citizen of Vienna, named John Veigel. The young Scotchmen took her for sixteen, but she was in reality over twenty-one.* Her story was a romance. When the children of Maria Teresa were learning dancing, this young girl was taken to the palace with some others to form a sort of class, and she was there said to have attracted the Empress's notice, so much so as to have been requested by her to change her name from Veigel—a patois corruption of Veilchen, a violet—into the corresponding and prettier French word. But it was said also that the Emperor's eye had fallen with favour on the young lady who came to practice with his children, and that the Empress, much alarmed, had sent her off to England, with

* She was born "on Leap-Year's day," 1724-5, at Vienna.—MS. House Book, Lichfield.

recommendations to influential persons there, with a view also to making her first appearance on the stage.* This little history has an air almost too melodramatic for probability. It seems much more likely—almost certain, indeed—that she should have come fresh from the *coulisses* of the Vienna theatre, than that she should have, at her age, crossed over into a foreign country, to make her *début*, before a strange and almost hostile audience; and the change of name can be much more naturally accounted for by the laws of theatrical euphony, than by the unaccountable "order" of an empress.† The fact that her brother, Ferdinand Charles, belonged to the Vienna ballet, makes it more than probable. She travelled in company with some foreigners named Rossiter, who were looking after some English property; and her disguise gives her the air of a lady who was accustomed to the footlights.

The Earl of Burlington and his family were, no doubt, among those to whom she brought introductions. As we have seen, they took her up with extraordinary warmth; and from mere patronage their attention grew into affection. The king patronized her first night, which shows that she had high interest. She was talked of everywhere, from Leicester House downwards; and—unusual privilege for a dancer—was made free of noble and fashionable houses. She was singularly attractive. A dainty little minia-

* She gave this account herself to a lady, who repeated it to Mr. Rackett, Mrs. Garrick's executor.

† There was long a sort of controversy as to what was the correct shape of her name. Murphy, with inexcusable carelessness, calls her Viletti: Davies, and many copying Davies, Violetti. Walpole more correctly calls her the Violetta, but in other places gives her her true name—the Violette. Violetti is neither Italian nor French.

ture of Petitot's, shows her as she appeared about this time—a sort of Watteau beauty, with a small round face, ripe lips, and a cloud of turquoise-coloured drapery floating about her; and although there is no mezzotint of her, in any character—like the splendid ones done in such profusion of her husband —to help us to an idea of the charms of the youthful dancer, even the copperplates in the magazines preserve this delicate and inviting character of her beauty. This attractive young Viennese, who had heard all London talk of the battle of Culloden, and who danced with such applause in that ill-fated year, became the wife of David Garrick, and lived long enough to sit to Mr. Robert Cruikshank, for one of his most characteristic etchings, some forty years ago.* There are many now alive who could have heard her telling of Maria Theresa and her court.

A second attempt to open the Opera-house under better auspices, and in all the satisfaction of victory, was made the following year, with such singers as Monticelli and Nardi. They were giving the operas of Glück, now in England, and who on his benefit night was to play a tune on a series of glasses filled with water. The theatre was administered by the Prince of Wales and Lord Middlesex, just as Drury Lane was later by Lord Byron and a company of noble directors. But with the royal manager of the theatre the new dancer had fallen into disfavour. He had required her to take lessons from a French dancing-master, Denoyer, an

* There is a charming picture by Zoffany, representing Mr. and Mrs. Garrick sitting in their garden, from which the frontispiece to the second volume of this work has been engraved. Nothing fresher or more delicate in colour can be conceived. In possession of her family is also a crayon drawing by Catharine Reed.

intriguer, and a useful tool of the prince, and she had refused. This piece of fortitude, remarkable in those days, may have helped to secure her the *entrée* to the rooms of Burlington House. It did certainly seem strange that a person of her condition should be treated with such marked distinction; and it was only to be expected, that the eager scandal-mongers of the town should account for it after their own lights.

Among those, who looked on at the "exquisite" dancing of the Violette, was young Burney, who had been a diligent frequenter of the Opera-house in the January of the year, and had seen poor Glück degraded to such hack work, as setting "The Fall of the Giants" —an operatic compliment to "the Duke" and his victories, which, however, there was still taste enough in the public not to go and see. The Violette was still the chief attraction. Two noble sisters, the Countesses of Burlington and Talbot, were competing for her, having her always at their houses. For Lady Burlington she was now sitting for her picture. She was a guest at Lady Carlisle's supper parties. She was the "rage;" and Walpole called her "the finest and most admired dancer in the world." Thus it continued until the end of July, when the amateur management and the "little theatre" went to pieces,— broken up by the waywardness of one of the noble managers. Lord Middlesex, who "protected" the Nardi at this theatre, became furious at the popularity of the Violette, and dragged the whole company into this rivalship. The principal male dancer was arrested for debt; to the luckless Glück, the noble manager gave a "bad note," in payment of his demands, and

then fined him three hundred pounds for taking part with his countrywoman, the Violette, in the theatrical squabble.

The partiality of the Burlingtons was still unabated. Lady Burlington, always impulsive and *exaltée*—as may be seen by her odd epitaph upon her own daughter—would go down with her to the theatre, and wait at the wings with a *pelisse* to throw over her when she should come off. She was taken to Lord Lovat's trial, and the *danseuse* was seen among the finest company.

In December, 1746, she had appeared at Drury Lane with infinite success, supported by a male dancer called Salomon. On one occasion she was put down for *three* dances without her knowledge, and the audience being disappointed, a riot had nearly taken place. The absurdities of the day had made follies, as Walpole said, enter into the politics of the time, —or rather they *were* the politics of the time. Thus young noblemen, like the young French bloods of our own era, flung themselves into wretched theatrical questions with an extraordinary ardour. On this night Lord Bury and some other men of fashion began a disturbance, and insisted on her being sent for to Burlington House. Next day it was the excitement of the hour; many great houses were thrown into agitation. Lord Hartington, son-in-law of Lady Burlington, was made to work the ministry, and used all his influence to secure a good reception for the dancer on her next appearance. "The Duke" was sent to desire Lord Bury not to hiss. But the Violette herself took the most effectual mode to appease the angry audience. She made a pretty and characteristic apology. She

"*humbly begs leave to acquaint the public* that she is very much concerned to hear that she has been charged with being the occasion of the noise on Wednesday night." She added that, "*she cannot possibly be guilty* of an intention to disoblige or give offence to an English audience, especially where she had met with so much indulgence, for which she retains all possible gratitude." This physical impossibility of being ungrateful is quite a foreign turn, and came gracefully from the pen of the popular *danseuse.* At the same time Lacy had before him the recollection of the *Chateauneuf* riot, only a few years before, when the house was all but "torn down," because a French figurante, who had been announced in the bills, did not appear.

Later, she paid a curious visit to the Tower with Lord Burlington, to see the political prisoners. He told her as they entered, "Every one that we shall see now is to be executed tomorrow,"—a speech that shocked her terribly. Such a visit was quite in keeping with the odd taste of the time, when Lady Townshend was committing all sorts of extravagances about Lord Balmerino, and Selwyn making jokes on the executions of the rebel lords. The prisoners were then brought in. They were drawn up, and among them was the famous "Jemmy Dawson", and an interesting youth, quite a boy, named Wilding, who belonged to an old English Catholic family. The young girl was so attracted by this child and the unhappy fate that was in store for him, that at the first opportunity she threw herself at the feet of her protector, and, with extraordinary vehemence, begged him to use all influence to save him. This intercession was successful. A

pardon was obtained on condition of his banishing himself to the North American colonies, where he was not long after killed, in a skirmish with the Indians. Some seventy years later, when the Wilding family had become nearly extinct, and an ancient maiden lady, at Liverpool, alone remained, a gentleman, named Rossan, was charged by her with a mission to Mrs. Garrick, to offer a somewhat late acknowledgment for this generous intercession. The gentleman performed his duty, and found that, though she was now old, the whole incident came gradually back on her.*

It needs only a glance at the tittle-tattle of Walpole's letters, to see upon what a slight foundation a hint is required to build up any story that was damaging to name or fame. When, therefore, this ostentatious, and it must be confessed, rather unusual, patronage of the Burlingtons was noticed, and the popular dancer seen at their parties, it was almost of course that the polite *Backbites* and *Sneers*, should whisper that this was a daughter of Lord Burlington's, born before his marriage, when he was abroad at Florence. This has been made a little mystery of; has been called "a disputed point," and a "vexed question;" but, in truth, has very little to support it, beyond the fact that a noble lord and his lady were very kind to her, and eventually provided for her.†

* This story was told to the writer of this memoir, by a lady who had it from the Mr. Rossan alluded to.

† A few plain facts will show how unworthy this bit of gossip is of being called a vexed question. First, he had been married two years *before* she was born, and from the date of his marriage lived many years in England without leaving it. Lady Burlington, too, was not likely to have shown such a partiality for one suspected to be so nearly related to her husband. Finally, Mrs. Garrick, when asked directly on the matter, denied it to Mrs. Carr. "No," she said, "but I am of noble birth." It would seem, then, that her father was some one of rank at Vienna, possibly one of the Sta-

The operas had now ceased to have their day, either through the fickleness of the town, or these dissensions in the management. A few months later, they were still being played: but no one thought of going to see them. The theatres then came to have their turn, and the rival managers, preparing for a serious struggle in the coming season, made such successful exertions, that it almost seemed as if Garrick had "held over" too long, and overreached himself. This was, no doubt, the opinion of his friend, Mrs. Cibber, who, for the last year or two, had been coquetting with both houses, and affecting a sort of retirement. He was far wiser. Lacy, gathering recruits for his season, made every offer to tempt Garrick to join; but the latter still refused, as Lacy's behaviour had rendered alliance impossible, or because the application for Drury Lane came too late, or more possibly, Garrick was flushed by the success of the six performances at Covent Garden. It was soon known that he had agreed with Rich for the coming season at Covent Garden, and, by his accession, helped to make the strongest company ever known at that theatre. Lacy had not been remiss. He

renberg family, from whom it is said she brought letters of introduction to England; and this, too, would account for the court patronage she received at Vienna. In short, the way she was treated, was exactly what might be expected in the case of a pretty and attractive girl, modest and well-conducted, though belonging to a dangerous profession, and known to have noble blood in her veins. On the other hand, a curious little story comes to me, told originally by a housekeeper in the Burlington family, and, though based on such a loose foundation, may be worth repeating. On this authority, the story ran, that Lord Burlington, coming to see her, was struck by a picture, and, on inquiry, found she was actually the daughter of a lady whom he had known abroad. The result was the discovery that the Violetta was actually his daughter. The authority of the old housekeeper seems below the dignity of biography, but her testimony comes to us very circumstantially.

had commissioned Sparks to make Barry fresh offers—even a hundred pounds in hand "by way of present." Now the town might look forward to a rare treat in the coming season, through the fair rivalry of two such strong companies.

CHAPTER IX.

QUIN AND GARRICK, THE NEW MANAGERS OF DRURY LANE.

1746—47.

IRELAND was then looked upon as quite another kingdom,—the reputation of its actors, as well as of its speakers in the Houses of Parliament, travelled to London, and was watched with interest. The advent of an actor "taller than the common size," graceful, elegant, said to have the most touching voice in the world, and whose conquests, among his audience, were not a little remarkable, was sufficient to excite the curiosity of the languid town. He promised to be a dangerous rival. Otherwise the forces were fairly matched. At Covent Garden were drawn up,—Garrick, Quin, Woodward, Ryan, Chapman, and Hippisley; with Mrs. Cibber, Mrs. Pritchard, and Mrs. Green. To meet them at Drury Lane were Barry, Beard, Taswell, Giffard, Macklin, Delane; Clive, Woffington, and a Mrs. Giffard. As regards the ladies, sprightly comedy seems to have gone to one house exclusively, and stately tragedy to the other. And though Walpole pronounced the Covent Garden company perhaps the best ever brought together, the "twinkling feet" of the Viennese dancer were likely to be a dangerous counter-attraction. With these forces both houses prepared for battle.

Lacy had secured Macklin as a sort of lieutenant,

and who, having grievances of his own against Garrick, was sure to be an eager auxiliary in the new competition. Macklin took his newly-arrived countryman by the hand, and supplied him with hints, as to matters likely to be useful to an actor, who was strange to a London audience. He led his friend about the parks, and other public places; and when people asked who was the distinguished-looking stranger that was walking with him, some spirit of waggishness made him answer that it was "the Earl of Munster;" and this, getting about, was actually believed, even when Barry was first seen upon the stage.* The Prince of Wales, it is said, thought him deficient in the graces of deportment, and forced his dancing-master on him, just as he wished to force this favourite on the Violette, in the early part of the year. Barry judiciously accepted this august patronage, which he may indeed have owed to Lord Chesterfield.

Covent Garden led off in September, and on October the 4th, the new actor made his *début* in *Othello*. His success was complete, and did not require the *claque* of his countrymen, who, it was said, crowded the galleries. Every one was struck with the fine figure, the graceful movements, and the uncommon sweetness and tenderness of the tones of his voice. "There was a burst of grief" in it, as one remarked who had often heard him; and in the scenes, where rage, jealousy, and tenderness succeeded each other, it assumed all the tones belonging to those passions, with the most marvellous versatility. There was a manliness and earnestness which was quite new; and his speech to the

* Kirkman.

senate, delivered with a genuine nature and simplicity, excited the deepest admiration. Ladies' eyes, fixed on him, and drinking in his persuasive tones, seemed to utter a repetition of *Desdemona's* speech—

"Would that heaven had made me such a man!"

And in the scene in the fourth act, where he was reproaching *Desdemona*, the agony of mind, the tender love, and the hopeless misery that came into his face, as he spoke the line—

"But there where I had garnered up my heart,"

was such as hardly to leave a dry eye in the house. So with his burst of *rapture* when he met her on his return from Cyprus; and it was noticed that, to the level passages at the beginning, generally slurred over by other actors, who were keeping themselves in reserve, he gave a meaning and force.

The greatest encouragement was the sight of old Colley Cibber, that link between the new and the old school, in the boxes, applauding vehemently and conspicuously; and it must have been a yet more surprising encouragement for the new actor to be told, that the veteran preferred his *Othello* to that of the famous Booth or Betterton. Davies indeed says it was considered his finest effort; but this seems a mistake. His physical gifts, as well as that peculiar style of tenderness and passion which all his contemporaries agree was his characteristic, point to another character, *Romeo*.

Scarcely a fortnight later his rival stepped upon the Covent Garden boards as *Hamlet*. But the formal Garrick and Barry contest was not to set in for some years; and we can be almost certain that no one

was more eager, and even sincere too, in his congratulations to the new *Othello,* than was Garrick. What was now to entertain the town, was the contest at the one house between Quin and Garrick. Nothing could be more distasteful to his nature than struggles of this kind; and though the injudicious good nature of friends assured him victory, and the spite of enemies forced a mere unavoidable combination into the shape of a "rivalship," he seems to have behaved all through, with a uniform superiority to all littleness of feeling,—even with a surprising generosity. Such a situation is always embarrassing for the party whose superiority is already established, for he feels that he is watched by curious eyes; and it was Garrick's lot to have this delicacy put to the proof on a whole series of occasions. We have seen with what forbearance he behaved to Sheridan, and shall see with what moderation he could forget the past, and give a *soi-disant* rival the fairest opportunity for "rivalry" and the leading parts on the boards of his own Drury Lane. From Ireland he had written home the warmest praise of Barry, a really dangerous competitor, calling him "the first lover" on the stage, and offering to advise him in every way. To him in later years he gave his stage, and his leading parts, put up with all manner of sensitiveness, bursts of jealousy, and pseudo grievances with a moderation and toleration that seems astonishing. Here, now, accident had thrown him into an unavoidable competition with Quin, who naturally felt a nervous jealousy at the favour of one who, after dispossessing him of his throne, seemed destined to be his rock a-head.

It was evident that Quin's strength lay in good,

bold, broad, and sterling comedy: in tragedy he represented merely the dry, colourless, declamatory elocution of the old time—that ancient style, tuned according to rule, and declaimed with harmonious conventionality. Yet with a curious blindness, he fancied that here was his superiority. He himself was eager for "rivalry," and by way of challenge came forward early in October as *King Richard.* It must have been a cruel shock to him to find a miserably thin house, with difficulty saved from emptiness. A week later came Garrick's turn in the same play, with an enormous house —a yet more cruel blow. Every one was eager to see their strength joined in one play; and it was a night of extraordinary interest and curiosity when the curtain rose on "The Fair Penitent," with Garrick as *Lothario,* and Quin *Horatio.* The scene was an exciting one. Each, as they appeared alternately, had his partisans; but in the second act when both met, the shouts of applause were so loud, raised again and again so noisily, that they appeared a little disconcerted. Garrick afterwards honestly confessed that he was, and Quin changed colour, though he affected to laugh it off. A young Westminster boy—Richard Cumberland—taken to this new performance and placed in front of the gallery, has left almost a photograph of what he beheld.

We can see Quin in his heavy green velvet coat, huge periwig and rolled stockings, "paving" out his periods in a full heavy monotony, accompanying his periods with a weary "sawing motion." We can hear Mrs. Cibber chaunting her periods in a sweet, sustained dead level, that, after a speech or two, fell wearily on the ears of the school-boy, and sounded like an old

ballad, with interminable verses. Of a sudden Garrick came bounding on the stage with a flash, bringing with him light and animation, a quick motion, a surprising variety of voice and manner—in short, ease and nature, in an almost comic contrast to stiffness and grim conventionality. It seemed like another life, a young beside an old one, new creatures beside those of an older world. Every muscle and nerve seemed in full play, as there stood the brilliant *Lothario* pointing at *Horatio.**

The Westminster boy said that the audience seemed to lean to their older favourite. But even making allowance for the force of the style and elocution, which they had been almost trained to like, and which has a charm and music of its own, as even now heard in the mouths of skilful French actors, this does not at all seem likely. It was a boy after all who was listening. Quin, too, may have had more opening for declamatory "points." Even when challenged by *Lothario* in a light prompt manner, Quin dragged out his answer, "I'll meet thee there!" with such slow rolling utterance, and with such a protracted pause that the story ran, that some one in the gallery called out to know why he did not give the gentleman an answer. It was a trying situation for the failing actor, and a little hard to keep his dignity and temper. The play was repeated many times, and was specially

* Many years afterwards, when they were dressing up Tate Wilkinson, at Drury Lane, for a ridiculous part of "The Fine Gentleman," they brought the very dress which Garrick wore in this part. The Westminster boy had not taken notice of it—a very short old suit of black velvet, with broad gold flowers, but which then had grown as dingy as the four-and-twenty letters on a piece of gilt gingerbread.

chosen for Saturdays, as a counter attraction to the best opera night.

But when "Henry the Fourth" was announced, Quin had his turn. In *Falstaff* he was unapproachable, in all the breadth, humour, and solidity of his great character. It was one of the great attractions of that season; and Garrick's *Hotspur*, which never suited him, quite dwindled into an inferior part beside it. It was played again and again. Even after the fifth night, when Garrick fell ill, or prudently retired, another actor was substituted for him, and the run went on. In "Jane Shore," *Hastings* restored Garrick's supremacy. That masterly part, and perhaps most elaborated of his characters, was repeated for a dozen nights.

They also played together in the "Distressed Mother." An old Lord Conyngham, who knew the *coulisses*, fancied he had seen them in "Julius Cæsar," and used to describe graphically the *Brutus* of Quin, as being like a great solid three-decker, immovable, and reserving its attack, while Garrick, as *Cassius*, seemed to fly round and round, attacking here and there, wherever there was an opening, with unflagging vivacity.* But he was confounding the "Fair Penitent" with Shakspeare's play. Garrick never played in this tragedy. Through the whole season they continued in perfect harmony. Everywhere Garrick was loud in praise of Quin's *Falstaff*. He relished his rough humour, and was determined not to be drawn into a quarrel.†

* Bernard's Retrospect. It was more probably suggested by a fine description in Aubrey.

† They supped together often; once at the "Crown and Anchor," when there being only one sedan chair to be procured, Quin insisted that they could go together, Garrick "in the lantern, he in the chair."

Meanwhile he had not forgotten his gift of farce writing; and having seen a little French piece of M. Fagan's, called the "Parisienne," adapted it very happily to the English stage. It was gay and full of spirit, and had at least five clearly drawn humorous characters. A true hoyden for Mrs. Green; a pert, rather free-tongued waiting woman for Mrs. Clive; a testy old baronet of the "heavy father" pattern for Taswell; a Bobadil captain for Woodward, and a mincing Macaroni for himself. Such figures and such actors were sure to carry any piece through. But the real attraction lay in the *Captain Flash* of Woodward and the *Fribble* of Garrick, two types of the town which were known to all. Every one had seen the "Derby Captains" swaggering hotly in the coffee-house, mere adventurers, who came and drank their Derby ale, ruffled it in their Kevenhuller hats and long swords, and were a nuisance to orderly citizens.

Some of the critics attacked Garrick for the coarseness of this piece; but in a few months he was to command instead of serving, and then could use his power for reformation. Others insisted that it was insipid, and wrote dreams in which *Dulness* appears with it in her hand. It drew large houses for many weeks, and was acted over twenty times. Quin grumbled at having to play in one of his best pieces, as a sort of *lever de rideau*, and swore he would not "hold up the tail of any farce." This speech was carried to Garrick, who said smartly, "Then I will give him a month's holidays," and chose a number of plays in which Quin had no part, acting his farce for four or five weeks. Such is Davies's report of mere green-room tattle. Garrick had not the power of choosing the

plays for the theatre, and Quin *was* content to hold up the tail of the farce at his own benefit.* In fact, Davies misapprehended Garrick's speech, the point of which was, that as Quin would not act on the nights of the farce, he was likely to give himself a long holiday, the piece was so popular. The truth was, as Murphy says, they had no actual difference, and, under rather trying circumstances, remained in tolerable good humour with each other during the season.†

Garrick was scarcely bearing in mind an excellent caution of his friend Walmesley: "I hope you will take care not to hurt your health by playing more than you can bear; for that would be the worst husbandry in the world." Several times in the season he had been obliged to retire, from illness, and Quin's benefit was obliged to be put off from the same reason. He became seriously ill indeed; a severe cold settled on his lungs, and he was confined to his bed for weeks. Yet he made attempts to rally, and his kindness in coming from a sick-bed to play for Quin's benefit was remarkable. He had not strength to go through a long comedy, but he was willing to attempt a farce.‡

That sickness had its advantages. It relieved him of the unsuitable part of *Hotspur*, and besides revealed his surprising popularity. During his illness, which lasted five or six weeks, and indeed recurred during the whole season, the door of the periwig-

* Geneste.

† Murphy says "it was universally agreed that Quin gained no addition to his fame by appearing in *Lear*, *Richard*, and *Macbeth* . . . . In 'The Orphan,' Quin was *Sciolto* and Garrick *Chamont*." This is a surprising collection of mistakes: Quin did not appear in *Lear*, and *Macbeth* was not acted at all. By *Sciolto* he means *Acasto*.

‡ His letter to Quin was printed at the top of the playbills.

maker, in James Street, Covent Garden, where he lodged, was quite blocked up with the footmen of persons of quality coming to ask after him. Of this interest and sympathy, we have plenty of instances all through his life, down to the last great procession—the player's funeral—up to Westminster Abbey.

In the following month the famous comedy of "The Suspicious Husband" was brought out, and *Ranger*, one of his most successful and spirited characters, was added to Garrick's *repertoire*. Actor and character were indeed worthy of each other, for nothing can exceed the buoyancy, the unflagging gaiety, the frolicsome *abandon* of this prince of good-natured rakes. It is one of the few *living* comedies, is written with extraordinary animation, and reads now almost as freshly as on the day it appeared. "The Provoked Husband," "The Suspicious Husband," "The Clandestine Marriage," "The School for Scandal," and Goldsmith's two dramas, are the five comedies of the eighteenth century. Nearly seventy years are gone of the nineteenth, and no comedy, approaching even "The Suspicious Husband," has yet appeared. As acted by Garrick, Woodward, and Mrs. Pritchard, it must have been an admirable and delightful entertainment.*

* The gaiety of *Ranger* starts from the moment the curtain rises. His talk with the servants; his reply to his friend, after being up all night:—

"*Bellamy.*—Fie! Ranger. Will you never think?

"*Ranger.*—Yes! but I can't be always a thinking. The law is a damnable dry study, Mr. Bellamy; there have I been at it these three hours; but the wenches will never let me alone.

"*Bel.*—Three hours! Why, do you usually study in such shoes and stockings?

"*Ran.*—Rat your inquisitive eyes! *Ex pede Herculem.* Egad, you have me. The truth is, I am but this moment returned from the tavern."

His quotation from "my Lord Coke," in "a case I read this morning,"

To the end of his life almost, it was one of Garrick's parts, and would seem to have suited him charmingly. In the same free key as the "Wonder," having its window and rope-ladders, and bed-chambers, it was the work of a medical member of a clever family: Dr. Hoadly—and so delighted the king with its genuine life and humour, that he sent a hundred pounds to the author, and had the play dedicated to himself. Garrick himself wrote prologue and epilogue, the last of which, in the shape of a fable, ended with rather an awkward suggestion as to the author of the play—"But *here* no artifice can hide the ass." *

This fine piece drew forth an excellent dramatic criticism from Foote, then playing at "The Hay," and preparing his "Diversions of the Morning," in which he pronounced it to be the best comedy since Vanbrugh's "Provoked Husband." It also brought out a bit of criticism, in the odd shape of a farce by Macklin, which lived but one night.† In fact, the play excited a storm of criticism at the Grecian and other coffee-houses, and was a sensation of the day.

Yet, with the prosperity of his season, the manager's behaviour and temper were a little strange. He had a spite to Garrick, and seemed to grudge the success that brought himself such profit. When the houses

and his friend's expostulation, "My Lord Coke?" and his answer, "Yes, my Lord Coke; Sleep! mere loss of time and hindrance of business; we men of spirit are above it;" and the whole kept up in the same tone, make it a most entertaining production. It must be admitted, however, that Strickland is but a repetition of Kitely.

* And the jealous growling spirit of the manager, who was in the pit, not unnaturally took a general expression, "the manager an owl," to himself.

† "The suspicious Husband criticized; or the Plague of Envy," was the extraordinary name of this production.

were overflowing, he was seen peeping through the curtain at the audience, muttering, "Ah, you are there, are you? Much good may it do you!" One of his pastimes even was to go down upon his knees, and give a burlesque of the curse in *Lear*, "in Garrick's manner," to the obsequious applause of his dependants. It is even said that he might have readily secured Garrick for many seasons more, but that he preferred his dislike to his interest, and let him go without a word.* On May 29th the season closed, with it is said, receipts to the amount of 8,000*l.* Garrick, with his recurring bad health and illnesses, had worked harder even than usual, and had played nearly ninety times.

Lacy's attempt at management seemed beyond his strength. A load of embarrassment was upon his shoulders. Had he received a fair chance, his own reputation for honesty, and his business qualifications might have carried him through; but his theatrical partners, the banking house of Green and Amber, began to totter, and finally fell with a crash. They had been suddenly called on by Government to pay in a large balance of nearly twenty thousand pounds, which had been lodged with them, and were obliged to stop payment. Mr. Riddle, receiver for the county of Bedford, father-in-law to Green, was made accountable by the Government for this sum in the hands of the bankers, and he, in his turn, was obliged to look to their securities. The theatre had been getting worse and worse; the audiences were growing thin; and the actors receiving no pay, quite supported Mrs. Cibber's

* Davies.—The direct contradictions of biographers are curious. Murphy says that Rich desired to re-engage Garrick for another season.

description of "Lacy's ragged regiment." Still he had struggled on, and with difficulties gathering about him, the mortgagee actually about to sell the green-room properties, and break up the whole concern, extricated the theatre with surprising skill: and now proposed to his creditors that they should use their joint interest in trying to get a new patent—the old one, which had but half a dozen years to run, being only worth a trifle. They would thus enormously increase the value of the security. Riddle at once agreed to so advantageous a proposal. As Lacy was to be for many years the useful friend and assistant of the actor in managing this great establishment, a few words about his history and character will not be out of place.

"A man of the name of Lacy," as Sir John Hawkins contemptuously called him, was in trade at Norwich, about the year 1722. He belonged to the Irish family of the name; and having met with some misfortunes in business, went up to London and joined Rich's corps. He seems to have been a person of steady purpose and good business habits, had a clear head without genius, and, besides, a buoyancy of disposition and purpose not to be checked by reverses. Above all, he had character; and the players in some of their squabbles, had accepted his word as ample security that they were to be paid their claims. He had a rough boisterous manner, which commended him to a particular class, and was, perhaps, an earnest of his honesty. He tried a great many schemes. He joined with Fielding in the unfortunate adventure at the Haymarket, and played the tragedy poet in the drama "Pasquin," which brought about the fatal Licensing Act. This, no doubt, led to his appearance

as a lecturer at York, in natural protest against the persecution which had so injured him; for many of the actors were then wandering about destitute and unable to get their bread.

His strictures, as they gave great offence to Sir John Hawkins, from their dealing freely with "the great officers of state and the clergy," we may assume to have been harmless enough and founded in reason. His entertainment, however, seemed to have come under the power of the Act, and was stopped, which the pompous Tory knight vindictively describes thus:—"He was seized, dealt with as a vagrant, and silenced." He it was who had started the idea of Ranelagh, that building which, according to Johnson, gave such an "expansion to the human mind." In this enterprise he was badly treated by his partner, but managed to withdraw from it successfully, having sold it at a profit of 4,000*l.*

He was "supposed to understand stage management," adds Sir John, contemptuously, "and had some friends." An important one was the Duke of Grafton, the Chamberlain, whom he had met out on hunting parties, and had used such opportunities as the field opened to him, to ingratiate himself with that nobleman. The story ran, that he had always kept close to the Duke, who was at last attracted by his hard riding, and the spirited horse he rode. Lacy at once offered it as a gift, which the Duke of course declined, but professed himself willing to befriend so good a sportsman.* The old Drury Lane patent for twenty-one years had but six years to run, having been granted in

* Shuter used to hunt also, and when complimented by the Duke, replied with some humour that "he was riding for a patent."

1732, and Lacy said, that if he could obtain a promise of renewal, he would step in and save the theatre from the ruin which must certainly overtake it. But he was not inclined to venture alone, and looking round the theatrical world his eyes settled on the great actor, with whom he had had differences, but whose temper, prudence, and tact, were as well known in the profession, as his dramatic gifts. Garrick received his proposals, and lent his aid; for it is said that Lady Burlington used her interest with the Devonshire family. The new patent was readily promised; indeed, it was likely that the authorities would be glad to have one theatre, at least, which was likely to be well conducted, by steady, respectable, clever men, instead of, as hitherto, by mere adventurers and spendthrifts.

Garrick had three friends, men of business and of substance, who advised and assisted him through the negotiation—Draper, the partner of Tonson; Clutterbuck, a mercer in the City; and Doctor Sharpe, who afterwards wrote some Italian travels, coloured by gross prejudices. On the 9th of April, 1747, an agreement was signed between the two new partners, on the following basis:—

The total present liabilities of the theatre, including the mortgage to Green and Amber, the mortgage to Mr. Meure, with the arrears due to actors and tradesmen, were calculated at about twelve thousand pounds. It was besides burdened with an annuity of 300*l.* to Calthorpe, and another of 500*l.* to Fleetwood. Of this twelve thousand pounds, Garrick, helped by his friends, found eight. Lacy's old interest and exertions, therefore, in procuring the renewed

patent, were thus valued at about 2000*l.* Each party was to draw weekly or otherwise, 500*l.* a year as manager, and Garrick was to receive besides 500*l.* a year salary for his acting, but was restrained from playing at any other house except on the terms of dividing profits with his fellow-manager. On the whole it proved a fortunate investment for his money. Rarely, indeed, have the functions of a clever and "drawing" actor and that of a skilful manager been so fortunately united; which after thirty years' skilful government was to make the property nearly six times as valuable. And this young manager, who had raised himself to so responsible an office, was little over thirty years old.

BOOK THE THIRD.

DRURY LANE.

CHAPTER I.

THE OPENING SEASON.

1747-48.

With the next season, and the new management, there was now to set in a hopeful era for the drama. At Drury Lane was to begin the reign of judgment, sense, fine acting, lavish yet judicious outlay, excellent yet not "sensational" attraction, and good management; on which almost immediately was to follow prosperity. Not only came financial prosperity, but a sudden elevation of the social position of the drama. It rose into respect and consideration. The other theatres shared in the general "rehabilitation;" and he would have been a bold magistrate who would have now dealt with a player of Drury Lane or Covent Garden "as a common rogue or vagabond."

On these principles the new managers went vigorously to work. They were determined to get together "the best company in England;" and were soon busy remodelling the house. They shared the labour—Garrick undertaking the intellectual duties, engagement of actors, selection of plays, &c.; Lacy looking after the theatre, scenes, wardrobe, and expenses, for

which he was peculiarly fitted. Garrick was to repent later, that he did not adopt the wise advice of friends, who would have inserted a clause, defining these duties: but a mistaken delicacy made him refuse.

The interior of the theatre, as laid out by Wren, had one remarkable feature. The stage projected forward by many feet into the body of the house, in a sort of oval, and followed the semicircular shape of the benches of the pit. The actors made their entrance through doors, which were down near to the audience, and made more side-scenes necessary. The player was thus in the middle of the house, every whisper and play of expression was perceptible,—every rich or fine-coloured habit had a more lively lustre, and the stage had a greater depth.* Cibber looked fondly back to this arrangement, and with reason, for it would be in favour with the old school of declamatory actors, who wished their measured utterance and mouthings to be heard and seen to the best advantage. But it obviously interfered with stage illusion,—abridged the space for the audience. A little after the commencement of the century fresh alterations were made, the stage was shortened and thrown back, and for the first doors, where the actors entered, stage boxes were substituted. By this alteration the house had been made to hold "ten pounds" more than it did before.

In July the managers were "in the midst of bricks and mortar," and Lacy was busy making new approaches to the house, altering it internally, painting and decorating. By a fresh re-arrangement it was con-

* Her Majesty's Theatre was constructed on this principle.

trived to increase the accommodation, by forty pounds a night. Thus the very first step of Garrick in his adventure was marked by that sound thought and profit, which attended all his actions. He himself had gone down to his family at Lichfield, and from damp sheets at Coventry, had fallen ill, and had to be bled. Then, to recruit himself for the ordeal of the coming season, he ran down to Tunbridge Wells, where he enjoyed himself exceedingly, and shook off the thought of coming responsibilities. "I go to bed at eleven; rise at seven; drink no malt, and think of nothing. Old Cibber is here, and very merry we are. Mr. Lyttleton and I are cup and can. I played at *E. O.*, and won. I don't dance, and eat like a ploughman."* This is gay enough, even though he was on a regimen. There is a print of that quaint old place, and its company, as it appeared in the following year; with "the pantiles," the little shops and trees, and its mall, crowded with remarkable persons; where is to be seen Mr. Johnson and Miss Chudleigh, and Mr. Pitt, and the Duchess of Norfolk; the Bishop of Salisbury, "the gambling baron," Mrs. Cibber, and many more persons of distinction and genius; and among them we discover Mr. Garrick, paying his court to Frasi, the *prima donna* of the opera.† To the end of his life he always enjoyed himself at Bath and Tunbridge, and found relaxation in the pleasant company there.

He was all the while busy enlisting recruits; and it

* Forster MSS.

† A copy of this print, with a key to the characters, may be seen in the entertaining edition of Boswell, published in the National Illustrated Library Series, the interest of which is in its illustrations, from a collection of prints, &c., made by two admirers of Johnson.

is characteristic, that at the earliest moment he found himself in power, he used it for the service of all his friends. Barry, growing in prosperity, already pronounced superior to Garrick in many favourite parts, he retained at his house. Mrs. Cibber, his old friend and ally, was also engaged. It was, indeed, at once whispered that the manager's favour was to place her in every leading part. This rumour even reached Bristol, brought up a petulant remonstrance from the Pritchards, husband and wife, and thus early gave Garrick his first managerial experience of the morbid sensitiveness of his actors.* A protest he answered in the good, generous, and reasoning way, which afterwards became almost habitual to him in dealing with such wounded sensibilities. He showed temperately that it was the proprietors' interest that Mrs. Pritchard should have her proper place at the theatre, and not be sacrificed to the empire of "any haughty woman." An expression that seems to hint, that there was a coldness between the former friends. "I have a great stake," he wrote, "Mr. Pritchard, and must endeavour to secure my property and my friends', to the best of my judgment. I shall engage the best company in England, if I can, and think it the interest of the best actors to be together." If, however, they had still doubts, he would do his best to release them, and let

* A friendly but anonymous writer privately sent to Garrick the key of this little intrigue. Rich had behaved with his usual eccentricity, wishing to detain Mrs. Pritchard, but protesting "that she had turned up her nose at what he had offered her, that he would never give her more, if he never opened his doors, and as to asking her, he would never do it, if his family was starving." Friends then promised they would contrive to make her break her articles with Garrick, by working on her husband's jealousy, and saying what a difference was made between Cibber and Pritchard, Cibber's name being always in large character in the bills. This, they said to Rich, will "fire" Pritchard.

them go to Covent Garden. And having reassured these jealous souls, he gave them the best proof of his regard by making their son treasurer to the theatre.

He was generous enough to engage Macklin and his wife—a man who, under a fancied sense of injury, had so grossly attacked him with tongue and pen. It is amusing to read Macklin's biographer on this act, which, even if it were an act of atonement, had a certain graciousness. "Although Mr. Macklin," he says, "had just cause to remember the cruel treatment he had formerly experienced at the hands of Mr. Garrick, yet *the nobleness and generosity of his mind prompted him now* to dismiss it *totally from his recollection.*" This is exquisite. But already Garrick showed that magnanimous and useful indifference, which, in matters that concerned the theatre, made him regard only its interest. Kitty Clive, "Peg" Woffington, Delane, Havard, Sparks, Yates, Shuter, and Woodward, who was to join after a Dublin engagement had been concluded, all made up a company not merely strong, but brilliant. Quin alone, still morose and aggrieved, refused an engagement, gave up the struggle, and retired to Bath.

At last, on September the 15th, the playhouse opened brilliantly with a fine prologue, from the pen of Samuel Johnson, Macklin as *Shylock*, and an epilogue spoken by Woffington. The prologue—weighty, impressive, and sonorous—contained the famous line—

> "Those who live to please, must please to live—"

and the fine encomium of Shakspeare—

> "Panting time toiled after him in vain!"

It also expounded to the audience what was to be the

faith and principles of the new management. Audiences were not to expect rope-dancers like Mahomet, boxers like Hunt, flying-chariots, or such pantomimic tricks. It was hinted with perfect truth, that the remedy lay with the audiences themselves, that the stage could not reform itself, but must follow the taste of the public. Garrick declaimed Johnson's majestic lines with fine effect, and a hum of approbation must have passed round, when they heard him say, and with singular appropriateness,—

> "From bard to bard the frigid caution crept,
> Till declamation roared, while passion slept."

And at the bottom of their bill, the audience found another hint of reform. There was to be no more admission behind the scenes; and "it was humbly hoped" that the audience would not take it amiss. Significant, too, was the choice of Macklin's *Shylock*— a ready commentary on Johnson's lines; for Macklin was of Garrick's own school, and with such a pair declamation was not likely to roar. Garrick himself fell ill a few days after the opening of the theatre, and as Johnson's fine prologue was repeatedly called for, it was at last published, with an apology from the manager, who hoped they would accept it in that shape. He himself was not able to appear until a month later.

Behind the scenes, also, a new order and new regularity had been introduced. Reforms were indeed sadly wanted there, for the greater actors had become careless as to learning their parts accurately, and were too often heard appealing to the prompter. A strict attendance at rehearsal was enforced, and the plays carefully prepared. Some of the older actors, who

from habit supplied the defects of memory and carelessness by "a bold front and forging matter of their own," were tacitly rebuked by being left aside for some time until they mended. Yates was a notorious offender.

The management relied principally on good stock-pieces, well supported, with one or two strongly-cast revivals, and a new play or two. Barry was put forward as the leading actor. He played in all his favourite characters. Nights of special attraction were, when Mrs. Woffington came out in her famous "breeches part," *Sir Harry Wildair*, with Garrick as *Fribble*, to wind up the evening; or, when Garrick and Barry played together in "The Orphan," and "The Fair Penitent;" or when Mrs. Cibber, Garrick, and Barry were joined in "Venice Preserved." The parts in this play seemed to have been cast *à travers*, for Garrick took *Jaffier*, the weak, tender, loving, irresolute conspirator; while Barry was the fierce, impetuous, and unscrupulous *Pierre;* still with the "enchanting melody" of Mrs. Cibber in *Belvidera*, and the nobleness and passionate tenderness of the play itself, it proved a great attraction. Later, on another stage, Barry took his right part; but, all this time, was secretly turning the occasion to profit as an opportunity for studying Garrick.*

Mrs. Cibber had another opening for her enchanting melody in *Polly;* and the new comedy of "The Foundling," by Edward Moore, brought out a wonderful cast. Barry showed all his handsome grace in *Sir Charles;*

* It was said, by those who wished to make mischief, that Garrick refused to play *Pierre* to Barry's *Jaffier*, saying, "I will not bully the monument!" It is of small importance whether this speech was made or not: but it is certain that Barry's part hitherto had always been *Pierre*.

Macklin, as *Faddle*, found a part that suited his oddities and convulsed the audience. *Faddle* was said to have been modelled after "an ingenious young gentleman" who had some skill in taking off the opera singers, and who was suffered, by the ladies who had turned his head, to be sent to gaol for forty pounds. Mrs. Cibber was all softness and music, and Woffington, in *Rosetta*, all pertness and prettiness; but Garrick, who had taken *Young Belmont*, a sort of walking gentleman, by his extraordinary spirit and versatility turned it into a leading character.

To Shakspeare due homage was paid in "The Tempest," and in a revival of "Macbeth;" but a Macbeth cleared from the "improvements" and decorations with which it had been daubed over by the clumsy mechanists of the stage. Three years before it had been thus played, but had not excited attention. Though considered a sort of good "stock" melodrama for a company, it was thought poorly of in the profession, as an opening for a leading actor. Even to bring it into a suitable condition, it had to endure the choppings and patchings of the restorers —a race who seemed to deal with these old plays much as inferior picture-cleaners do with acknowledged masterpieces. For these not only clean and "restore," but have to put in some of their own colouring. In this way, for more than eighty years, audiences had looked on, and applauded this spurious Shakspeare, without question, and actors had declaimed Davenant's "fustian," without ever dreaming that it was not the true inspiration of the "Swan of Avon." Much more "business" was put in. To-

wards the end, *Lady Macbeth* invites her husband to resign his crown—in a sort of jingle:—

> "There has been too much blood already spilt:
> Make not your subjects victims to your guilt."

It shows how ignorant the restorer Davenant was of the true notion of *Lady Macbeth's* intrepid character, when he could make her give such advice. *Macbeth* —Davenant's hero—rejects the proposal:—

> "Resign my crown?—and with it both our lives.
> I must have better counsellors.
> *Lady Macbeth.* What your witches?
> Curse on your messengers of hell! Their breaths
> Infected first my breath. See me no more
> As king: your crown sits heavy on your head,
> But heavier on my heart. I have had too much
> Of kings already. See, the ghost again!"

And that bit of dramatic effect is made to do duty once more. Locke's music was introduced, and with excellent dancing, it was made into a sort of *feerie*. Davies recollected seeing the best dancers of his time performing their *entrechatts* as witches. Even now there are many who, going to hear "Locke's music to Macbeth" "done" by some musical society, accept devoutly the quaint rhymes of that composition as the work of the mighty dramatist himself, and when the singers are bellowing,

> "We fly by night, we fly by night!"

fancy they catch the true Shakspearean ring.

Garrick, with that surprising instinct of what was decent and fitting and reverent, determined to cart away, as it were, all this rubbish before he applied himself to study the character. The players smiled when they heard what he was attempting, and thought the idea of making a hit in "Macbeth" simply ludi-

crous. There was some bustle and scope for acting in the first two acts, but after that, surely, nothing was to be done; and if he got rid of Davenant's "business," the plot would languish hopelessly. There were no "effects." Garrick only smiled, in *his* turn. *He* knew what could be made of the original text.

The forthcoming alteration was heralded by "feelers" in the papers. The town was let into the secret of what was preparing. To the end of his life, Garrick had always this morbid sensitiveness, as to the manner in which any new dramatic move of his would be welcomed. It went forth that "Macbeth" as written by Shakspeare was about being revived. Even Quin had been said to have asked, in astonishment, "What! do not I play 'Macbeth' as written by Shakspeare?" And when he heard Garrick declaiming:—

> "The devil damn thee black, thou cream fac'd loon,
> Where got'st thou that goose-look?"

he asked him where on earth he had got such strange language. Garrick found that the end was a little tame, and added "a dying speech" for himself, which, it is probable, will always keep its place.

Nothing, indeed, was more wonderful than that he should with such ease put before the public a series of great characters, each marked by something new, striking, and original. There could not have been very much study in these rough first draughts; but his bold and novel conception of each part showed the true instinct and daring of original genius. As in the other tragedies, he had not yet thought of breaking through the old conventional style of dress; and the audience saw the famous

Scotch thane wearing a scarlet coat like a military officer, a waistcoat laced with silver, with a wig and breeches of the cut of the time.* Not yet had the bold innovator Macklin, in his old age, thought of bringing forward the tartan and kilt. Half the attraction was in Mrs. Pritchard's incomparable acting—who, from that moment, took her place in the foremost rank. Such a pair, and such a performance, have never been rivalled on the stage.

Macklin, though a member of the company, was not yet reconciled, and took a curious mode of showing his resentment. For his benefit he had chosen an old-fashioned piece of Ford's, and to stimulate curiosity had written antiquarian letters to the newspapers.† He asked and obtained the services of everyone in the company, excepting those of Garrick, to whom he disdained to make such a request.‡ This poor exhibition of spite was more an injury to himself, than to the manager. These were the features of the first season of the new management, which was certainly carried through with spirit and effect. It ended about the last week in May; Garrick having played over one hundred times.

Of how he lived and flourished after this opening of his theatre, a gay town friend sends a very lively sketch down to Lichfield: "I must give you an account

* This may be seen in Zoffany's picture of the dagger scene. Another, no less absurd, by Dawes, exhibits him in the fighting scenes, dressed as a *Spanish* general—breast-plate, slashed trunks, large pointed hat and open collar.

† In these he quoted from a curious pamphlet, "Old Ben's Light Heart," &c., in support of his own views. When pressed in a subsequent controversy to produce the original, he said it had been lost in a shipwreck. It was believed to be a forgery.

‡ Boaden.

of David," writes Wyndham down to Peter. "He is very well, in high spirits, and much followed, with constant full houses. There is no one to compete with him." He then described a new rule which the manager had been so courageous as to introduce, namely, that all were to pay at the box-door, and thus prevent "bilking, and frisking in and out."* Rich was struggling against him at Covent Garden, but was very bad. Foote was giving his "Tea," and was to come out that week with an abusive satire on David and Lacy. Lacy had sworn that he would break Foote's head, and went to the licenser to complain; but David sent also, fearing that it would be given out that this had been done at his instigation, and said Mr. Foote was quite welcome. "Which," says Wyndham, "I think a most well-judged thing." He was greatly pleased with David's "charming lodging" in King Street, Covent Garden, which was furnished very neatly, and in the best taste.† Thus early had Foote begun his attacks, and thus early did Garrick show that surprising toleration and indifference —"a most well-judged thing"—which was to be the secret of his success. It may be considered the first scene in that curious drama of semi-hostility, semi-

* The disorder behind the scenes may be guessed from a little sketch of Garrick's own, in his farce of "Lethe." The "Fine Gentleman" says: "I stand upon the stage, talk loud, and stare about; which confounds the actors and disturbs the audience; upon which the galleries, who hate the appearance of one of us, begin to hiss, and cry 'Off, off!' whilst I, undaunted, stamp my foot—so,—loll with my shoulders, take snuff and smile scornfully, thus. This exasperates the savages, and they attack us with volleys of sucked oranges and half-eaten pippins." Fielding describes the behaviour of the better part of the audience—the fine ladies taking a box, and sending their footman to sit there during the first two acts, "to show his livery." Arriving themselves, they spread their fans upon the spikes—*i.e.*, on the stage—"make curtsies to their friends, and talk and laugh as loud as they can."

† Forster MSS.

friendship which coloured their intercourse; which one would be inclined to set down to the envy with which unsuccessful talent has sometimes pursued a rival, to whom it believes itself superior, but which a skilful judge of character, and its mysterious moods, has more delicately accounted for. "From the first they were marked out for rivalry. Distinguished by their superior intellectual qualities from all competitors in the profession to which they belonged, they had only each other to carry on a competition with; and if, as Pope says, war is necessary to the life of a wit upon earth, what are we to expect when the wit has another in the same line to make war upon, who is not only jester and player like himself, but rival manager too? The virtue must be more than human that refrains. . . . No doubt also, Foote was almost always the aggressor. His wit was ever at his best with a victim wincing under it, and Garrick's too obvious weaknesses were a temptation difficult to be resisted."* This happily describes this most unpleasant relation; though, it must be added, that Foote's later aggressions, unchecked through Garrick's toleration and, perhaps, weakness, grew at last to assume an unjustifiable grossness which repeated *amendes* could not extenuate.

* Forster's Essays, p. 369.

CHAPTER II.

MARRIAGE.

1748—49.

GARRICK'S second season began in September; but he had already suffered from desertions. Delane and Sparks were seduced to Covent Garden; its extraordinary manager, Rich, at last rousing himself from his languor. A more serious loss was Mrs. Woffington. The manager's new attachment was, no doubt, distasteful to her, as well as the supremacy of Mrs. Cibber—to say nothing of collisions with Mrs. Clive. Garrick, with his heart now set on a new shape of domestic life, was anxious to be wholly free from all association with the past.

At the commencement, the burden lay on Woodward and his special range of character, and on Barry in "Othello" and "Hamlet." The chief attraction before Christmas was two Shakspearean revivals. Never was there a more legitimate success than that of Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard in *Benedick* and *Beatrice*, for it was the triumph of true genius, exercised in the most perfect and buoyant bit of comedy that could be conceived. So evenly matched were their powers, and so sparkling the alternations of their vivacious rivalry, that the town found it impossible to decide the question of superiority. When the actress was gone, the play lost all its attraction. An excellent revival

was that of "A New Way to Pay Old Debts;" but it seemed unmeaning to revive it for the sake of giving *Sir Giles* to the obscure Bridges, for it seemed a part that he himself could have made much of. It, however, introduced an admirable player—King—who was to become a comedian of the very first order. Indeed, Woodward and King represent a type of player now extinct, whose talents, bright, gay, and luxuriant, filled in a character, and made that character illustrate the piece; so different from the modern system, when the piece has become a mere background for the centre figure. A yet more important revival had been occupying his thoughts, and was the result of much pains and care. This was "Romeo and Juliet"—the play of poetry, grace, and tenderness, put into the appropriate hands of the very priest and priestess of grace, pathos, and tenderness—Barry and Mrs. Cibber. Here again we see the temperate self-denial of Garrick. It was a tempting opportunity; and though the part was infinitely more suited to Barry than to Garrick, the town would have readily found indulgence for the manager, who had seized on the prize for himself. He took the play with him into his closet; and, with an odd inconsistency, the man who had just cleared "Macbeth" from the thick crusts and varnishes with which Davenant and other Shakspearean "restorers" had coated it, did not shrink from putting an entirely new catastrophe to the story of the Verona lovers.

There are many who go to our theatres now, and are melted over the wakening of *Juliet* in the tomb, the long and touching scene between the lovers that follows, and never dream that *Romeo* should have

died just after his combat with *County Paris.*" The whole of that interview is a clever bit of sham Shakspearean writing, really well done, even to the "fathers have flinty hearts," which has been sometimes quoted as a bit of the genuine stuff.* It is impossible to deny that the play gains action, by this daring interpolation, which, besides, was in some degree justifiable, as being based on the version of the tale as told by Bandello and followed by Otway.† At the same time, he deserves some credit for the manner in which he has fallen into the tone of the situation, and caught up the sweet key of Shakspeare's music. So dramatic is this finale, and so indispensable is it now grown, that the play is never played without it, and were it revived as Shakspeare wrote it, would be found sadly inefficient for the "star" actors playing it. Garrick himself attended all the rehearsals, gave his hints, watched it carefully, and the result was a marvellous performance, which drew the whole town for nineteen nights.

Meanwhile his old friend and schoolfellow, Samuel Johnson, struggling on through "garret toil and

* The whole is a clever Pasticcio, and well done.

"'Twixt death and love I'm torn : I am distracted—
But death's strongest—"

is Garrick.

"I'll not wed Paris : Romeo is my husband!"

is Otway.

"Oh, let me hear some voice
Besides my own, in this drear vault of death!"

These lines are from the "Mourning Bride."

† Murphy's praise of this alteration amounts to extravagance. "Garrick, beyond all question, has shown superior skill" to Otway. "He rouses a variety of passions. We are transported with joy, surprise, and rapture, and by a rapid change we are suddenly overwhelmed with despair, grief, and pity. *Every word pierces to the heart, and the catastrophe as it now stands is the most affecting in the whole compass of the drama!*"

London loneliness," glad to get fifteen guineas for a masterly poem, busy with what can only be called the most gigantic "hackwork" that could be conceived, the "great English Dictionary," had thought of his old tragedy, which years before had brought him up to London, full of theatrical designs. Very different fortunes had befallen the actor and the scholar, who had started together from Lichfield. Garrick was now at the head of the first theatre in England, in easy if not in opulent circumstances; Johnson was fighting a cruel battle, and not yet known as the great Dr. Samuel Johnson, the weighty representative man of sturdy English principles and morals, and the pure classic model of the time. For Garrick to take his friend's play, and use all his resources to bring out what he must have seen was a heavy and unskilful piece, even compared with the existing dreary models of historical tragedy, was certainly no little proof of kindness and true generosity. This drama, some acts of which had been written in a country town before its author had read Shakspeare, and which had been read over with Peter Garrick in the Fountain Coffee-house, then frequented by Fleetwood, was now at the beginning of the new year put in rehearsal at Drury Lane. The manager tried hard to have some "business" introduced into the play. He felt that Johnson's cold and solemn platitudes would set the audience yawning, and perhaps empty the theatre. But Johnson hotly resented this interference, and it nearly brought about a quarrel. It is characteristic that Garrick, instead of using his power, should have merely applied to a common friend to reason with the angry author. "Sir," said Johnson, in reply, "*the fellow* wants me to make

Mahomet run mad, that he may have an opportunity of tossing his hands, and kicking his heels." The "fellow," however, did not play *Mahomet*, but *Demetrius*. *Mahomet* was resigned to Barry, to give the play every advantage, and win all his zeal for the author; but he made only a poor part of it.

On the 6th of February was the first night of "Mahomet and Irene," more remarkable perhaps from its showing Johnson in the side boxes of the theatre, not in his old brown suit, but glowing in "a laced waistcoat" and new flaming scarlet coat—flitting in that unwonted raiment from the *coulisses*, where were the actresses, to the boxes, and from boxes to the *coulisses*. Here surely is a subject for our Wards and O'Neils, as characteristic and suggestive of humour as Leslie himself could have found. In the hands of that fresh and delightful master, the "scarlet coat" assorting ill with the rude, heavy features of Johnson, would have lit up a picture as remarkable as *Uncle Toby* in the Sentry Box.

It was an anxious night. In the beginning, before the curtain rose, shrill catcalls were heard, which the author himself a little imprudently deprecated in his prologue.* Garrick had spared neither trouble nor expense for his friend. The costumes were superb. There was one scene, representing a Turkish garden, which was considered a triumph of scenic skill. Yet all that could be done for it in the way of sumptuous dresses and eastern scenery, was of little avail. Though

* The epilogue was said to have been written by Sir William Yonge. "I know not," says Boswell, in his own true key, "how Johnson's play came to be *thus graced by the pen of a person then so eminent in the political world.*" And this obsequious doubt seems well founded, as the better opinion would now appear to be that it was in part written by Johnson himself.

the prologue "soothed the audience," nothing could lighten the hopeless declamation of the piece, which was as cold and dull as the most monotonous tragedy of the French school. The grand "spectacle" could not help it off. Even the clap-trap description of the English Constitution, absurdly put into the mouth of one of the lower Turks, was of no profit. Mrs. Pritchard, Barry, and Garrick declaimed their dull parts with surprising vigour and elocution; but nothing could give it life. Even the desperate resource suggested by Garrick of having the heroine put to death by the bow-string before the audience, became ludicrous from sheer contrast, and the house screamed out "Murder! murder!" She tried in vain to speak, but her voice was drowned in a chorus of disapprobation. Young Burney, however, says that, with this exception, the play was fairly received. Garrick's zeal and friendly interest kept it before the public, for at least the regular nine nights, to allow the author to have his three nights' profits, which reached to close on two hundred pounds; this, with one hundred pounds for the sale of the copyright, was a very substantial return for so indifferent a play. But Johnson was not satisfied, and, like many a dramatist before and since, complained that justice had not been done him by the actors. He was heard growling his disapprobation in the orchestra. From that time he had a grudge, born of ill success, against his friend.

Garrick also tried to keep Barry in good humour by playing *Iago* to his *Othello*, a part which he seems to have attempted only once. He revived his own farce, "Lethe," with new characters, which, as they did not make any striking effect, he resigned at once to other

actors. In Aaron Hill's solemn *Merope*, he seemed, to the ladies of his audience, to look and play like an angel. Perhaps there was one lady certainly to whom this praise would scarcely have seemed an exaggeration; for all this time the hard-worked manager had his eyes fixed on Burlington House, and though every obstacle was thrown in the way of their attachment, he had contrived to secure a firm hold on her affections. The young dancer constantly withstood many trials, the pressure of her kind patroness and guardian, and even the offers of suitors of family and position. This secrecy and these impediments, gave it all the air of a little romance. And with this attachment is connected a melo-dramatic story, which has been made the basis of a popular German piece, which again has been adapted to the English stage, to show off the talents of a versatile comedian of our own time, who represents to perfection Garrick's *Fribble*, in the dress of the present day.

The story is of a peculiar class, associated with Garrick's name, the details of which usually turn on his marvellous powers of mimicry and facial expression. Under some of these lies a small basis of truth; others seem transparently manufactured. A young city lady, with a despotic father, has fallen frantically in love with *Romeo* as played by Mr. Garrick; grows sick, and is at the point of death. He is sent for; is treated with contempt as "a stage player" by the father, who talks of the folly of being moved by sham emotions. There are various versions of the young girl's cure. In one she is taken to see him in *Abel Drugger*, and is completely "*désillusionnée.*" In another version the actor is brought to her as a doctor; reveals himself as

Romeo, talks to her, drinks as he talks; and by the incoherent ravings of intoxication, awakens her from her delusion. In the German play it is a baronet, in the English a city merchant. But the point of the story is nearly the same in all.

Lee Lewes, the comedian, giving a minute account of the courtship of the Violette by Garrick, mentions incidents like these, and which he says he heard through an aged domestic of the Burlington family. The dancer had seen Garrick in one of his characters; had fallen desperately in love with him; had become sick, like the lady in the anecdote, and no one could divine the cause. Lady Burlington had designed her for a rich and important alliance, and would never consent to an alliance with a player. But a clever doctor found the secret out, represented that it was a matter of life and death, and obtained the lady's reluctant consent. This is obviously the basis of the dramatic story; though Lee Lewes and his "old domestic" can hardly be depended on, especially as to the details and private conversations, which are given with a suspicious minuteness and fulness.*

It was, however, matter of notoriety that Lady Burlington opposed Garrick's advances, and the Violette used to tell afterwards, how he had once disguised himself in woman's clothes, to have the opportunity of conveying a letter to her. There is, besides, the testimony of an old gentleman of eighty, alive not very long ago, who was told by Mrs. Garrick herself, that the German story was, in the main, true, and that it was Garrick's noble self-denial in the business

* Yet this is a common shape of theatrical memoir writing, varnishing over, expanding, in a dramatic shape, some little fact that is really authentic.

(which, let it be remembered, is quite in keeping with his character) that induced Lady Burlington to give her consent.* This does not quite agree with the "old domestic's" account, and perhaps proves a little too much. But still we may accept the main outlines —the falling in love—the illness—Garrick's generous self-restraint, and the happy accommodation. Travelling so far as Germany, it may have acquired many of the theatrical tones and details upon the road.†

The Patroness looked after her *protégée* with extraordinary care and jealousy. When the Violette's benefit came on, Kent, an artist of reputation, was employed to design the tickets.‡ Everything was done to show her off to advantage. When, in March, 1748, the strange Duchess of Queensberry gave a masquerade at Richmond, at which she behaved with much extravagance, turning out half the company at midnight, and arbitrarily keeping the other half to supper, Lady Burlington was seen walking about with her charge on her arm, and Lord Coventry following with extraordinary persistence. The countess, it was noticed, motioned to him, and drawing off her glove, significantly moved her ring up and down her finger—a hint that was very intelligible. When the countess took her to a splendid masquerade on the river, where was the king, and dukes, and princes, and "God save the King" was sung by the royal family themselves to the mob over the rails, Mr. Gar-

* See "Household Words" for 1857.

† This German narrative brings in also the name of a barrister friend of the actor's, a Mr. Bingham, of Lincoln's Inn, with whom he had once studied law; and such a name is to be found among the barristers of that date. This gives a circumstantial air.

‡ A writer in "The Gentleman's Magazine," 1822, had seen two of these.

rick contrived to be brought there also, by some of the Richmond family. Lady Burlington kept watch over her charge jealously, while Garrick, "ogling and sighing" from a distance, caused much amusement to those who were behind the scenes. A diplomatist, who belonged to the Duke of Modena's court, was asking Walpole questions about this lady and the other. That was Lady Huntingdon. "And the next one?" It was a distressing question, said Walpole, but after a little hesitation, he replied: "Mais c'est Mademoiselle Violetta." The diplomatist looked puzzled, and searched his memory. "Et comment Mademoiselle Violetta—j'ai connu une Mademoiselle Violetta par exemple"—he was thinking of the Ballet, but Walpole adroitly turned off his attention to a Miss Bishop. It was not so easy to turn off the eyes of the lover now busy watching. At last, such constancy was to prevail; he wrote a formal proposal to Lady Burlington: her opposition was withdrawn, or perhaps she saw that it was useless, and she finally gave her consent.

Yet the lover, now happily at the end of this long courtship, with all through his life a great uneasiness as to what the public or private people were saying and thinking of him, now began to grow sensitive about the attention that was being directed to his designs. He shrank from the discussion, and perhaps ridicule, that was sure to follow when his proposed marriage should become known. Nor was this unnatural; for already had appeared in the paper a premature notice of his marriage, announcing it as having taken place on the 25th of May: "Mr. Garrick, the comedian, to Mademoiselle Violetta, the

famous dancer," being the blunt description, which could not have been very welcome. It was suspected that some complimentary verses, with which the curious public amused itself, were not quite a surprise to him. Fortune was made to ask why Slander is always "sneering at me and poor Davy?" The truth was, Slander believed that

> "The creature loved self,
> And cared not a fig for a soul but himself."

Fortune, then determining to find him a wife, "rested her wheel within Burlington Gate." Lady Burlington is then made to say,—

> "I'll show you a girl. Here, Martin, go tell—
> But she's gone to undress, by-and-bye is as well.
> I'll show you a sight that you'll fancy uncommon,
> Wit, beauty, and goodness, all met in a woman.
> A heart to no folly or mischief inclined,
> A body all grace, and all sweetness in mind."

It is asked then where such a charmer is to be found. "Who, indeed," says my lady, "if not Violetta?" And presently—

> "The words were scarce spoke when she entered the room.
> A blush at the stranger still heightened her bloom;
> So humble her looks, so mild was her air," &c.

With much more in the same vein.

Not satisfied with this free-and-easy introduction of his bride's name and his own to the public, he took another, and what he fancied was an effectual way, to deprecate the ridicule he so feared. On the eve of his marriage some fresh verses appeared, which are to be found among his friend Edward Moore's poems, but which were said to be written by himself, or at least

under his inspiration.* They were headed "Stanzas to Mr. G——k on the Talk of the Town," and had the following motto from "Much Ado about Nothing:"

"'When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married.'

"'No, no; the left-hand box, in blue;
There, don't you see her?' 'See her? Who?'
'Nay, hang me if I tell;
There's Garrick in the music box.
Watch but his eyes. See them, O pox!
Your servant, Mademoiselle."

"But tell me, *David*, is it true?
Lord keep us!—what will some folks do?
How will they curse the stranger!
What, fairly taken in for life,
A sober, serious, wedded wife!
O fie upon you, *Ranger!*"

Then the "ladies" are described as, talking it over, "pale, wild as the witches in 'Macbeth'" —

"Married! but don't you think, my dear,
He's growing out of fashion?
People may fancy what they will,
But Quin's the only actor still,
To treat the tender passion."

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* Among his papers I find the following:—

"VERSES SENT TO ME ON MY MARRIAGE.

"What! has that heart, so wild, so roving,
So prone to changing, sighing, loving,
Whom widows, maids, attacked in vain,
At last submitted to the chain?
Who is the paragon, the marvellous she,
Has fixed a weather-cock like thee?"

He wrote a reply, which contains a true picture of the bride:—

"'Tis not, my friend, her speaking face,
Her shape, her youth, her winning grace,
Have reach'd my heart; the fair one's mind,
Quick as her eyes, yet soft and kind.
A gaiety with innocence;
A soft address, with manly sense.
Ravishing manners, void of art,
A cheerful, firm, yet feeling heart.
Beauty that charms all public gaze,
And humble amid pomp and praise."—HILL MSS.

" 'Nay, madam; did you mind last night
His Archer: not a line on't right?
I thought I heard some hisses.'
Two parts, they readily allow,
Are yours, but not one more, I vow.
And thus they close their spite."

It winds up with a soothing compliment, bidding him not to mind their speeches:

" Take, you can't do better,
A pox upon the tattling town;
The fops that join to cry her down
Would give their ears to get her."

Which was, indeed, the truth; for her sturdy rejection of the advances of the "fine gentlemen," as unusual as it was admirable, had made her hosts of detractors. It thus concludes—

" And if her heart be good and kind,
And sure that face bespeaks a mind
As soft as woman's can be."

His wedding present was a silver tea-kettle and a little casket for holding tea, which was to stand afterwards on the table, at which was their coziest and happiest of meals. Many was the actor, and candidate for acting, invited to breakfast, when Mrs. Garrick sat and made tea and took her part in passing judgment.* Lady Burlington, now softened, presented him with a prayer-book, a very modest *souvenir*, but for which he was very grateful.†

At last, on the 22nd of June, they were married, first by Dr. Francklin, at the church in Russell

* These presents are still to be seen, and were of a handsome and substantial sort.

† He wrote some lines in the beginning—

" This sacred book has Dorothea given,
To show a straying sheep the way to Heaven;
With forms of righteousness she well may part,
Who bears the spirit in her upright heart."

Street, Bloomsbury, and afterwards at the chapel of the Portuguese Embassy in Audley Street, by the Rev. Mr. Blyth.* After the public announcement, came the figures "£10,000," which was quite accurate; for this was given out to be the dancer's fortune. In effect, she had £10,000 settled on her, of which, it was said, the Burlingtons found six, and Garrick the rest. Lady Burlington herself signed the settlements.† Walpole wrote out the news to Florence, but could not understand the business. "The chapter of this history is a little obscure," he said, especially as to the consent of the countess, and the fortune. It was indeed a surprising little romance: and it was more surprising still that the marriage of a comedian, whom parliament but a few years before would have described as "a common rogue and a vagabond," with a "famous dancer," whom it could have sent to the House of Correction, should have gained such prestige, have attracted such attention, and be celebrated under the patronage and friendship of dukes and lords. This was certainly fair evidence of the weight of Garrick's private character, and of the respectability and position to which he had raised himself and his theatre.

* As she herself told Mr. Smith, it took place at 8 o'clock in the morning. The newspapers on this occasion reported it with infinitely more respect. It was now "David Garrick, Esq., to Mademoiselle Eva Maria Violetta," without either "comedian" or "famous dancer." The two biographers, Murphy and Davies, place this ceremony in July.

† Mr. Carr, who was Garrick's solicitor, and afterwards lived in Hampton Villa, when asked on this point by "Rainy-day Smith," seemed to say that Mrs. Garrick denied ever receiving money from the Burlingtons, adding that she had only the interest of £6,000, which was paid to her by the Duke of Devonshire. The Duke, whose son had married Lady Burlington's daughter, would naturally have been chosen a trustee for the settlement. It would seem probable, therefore, that the money came from Germany, furnished by the same high interest which had sent her to England.

CHAPTER III.

HOGARTH.—FOOTE.—THE RIVAL ROMEOS.

1749—1750.

No happier honeymoon could be conceived. The newly-married pair travelled about, stayed at Chiswick, and at Burlington House; though it is plain that Lady Burlington's peculiar temper was to make the actor's relations with her rather delicate. Thus, they had fixed to go down to Lichfield, on a visit to Peter, and were duly expected; "but," writes Mr. Garrick, excusing himself, "when we hinted it to the family here, we had only grave faces and cool answers." Though the noble family might tolerate the player, they did not relish their *protégée* going to the player's relations. Garrick was too independent to accept patronage at the price of an obsequious slavery, and there soon came a rupture; though with Lord Burlington, he was always on the best of terms.*

At this pleasant time, Lichfield folks would come up to London and go to Ranelagh, then new and in high fashion, and be amazed to see their townsman the player in such fine company. But "Mrs. B. and Penelope S.," whoever they were, could report nothing

* Lord Hartington was his real friend, and a true peace-maker. Later he wrote to Garrick, after one of these differences—"Lady Burlington was afraid you were gone away for the last time, and I said you were a warm, impetuous man, but a very honest one."—*Forster MSS.*

"fine" on his part. He came up and walked and talked with them, "and they seemed pleased," he says characteristically, "for I left Lady Hartington and my wife and their company to entertain them."* And Mr. Garrick, who himself dearly loved a lord, was not displeased that they should bring home an account of the fine people from whom they had taken him away.

He had given up his handsomely-furnished bachelor lodgings, in Covent Garden, and now looked out for a house where he might set up an establishment. He found one that suited him, in Southampton Street, which in those pre-west-end days was not an ungenteel quarter, and which, it was said, he took from Mr. Sheldon at far more than its value.† It was within five minutes' walk of his theatre, and from the bottom of the street came up the buzz and hum of London traffic hurrying through the great artery of the Strand. As we now walk up the street, we can see on the left, within a few doors of the top, one of the good chocolate-coloured houses, built of sound old brick, its long, thin windows very close together, and with a more architectural pretence than any house in the street. Within there is plenty of the old panelling, and beyond the study, the little room where Mr. and Mrs. Garrick used to breakfast.‡ There he was to live for some years, and Mr. Garrick's house in Southampton Street became one of the best known residences in London.

Domestic happiness might now comfort him, after

* Forster MSS. † Cradock.

‡ It is now number 27, and was lately Eastey's Hotel. The excellent society that has been formed for the purpose of marking the residences of celebrated men, might have one of their tablets inserted in the front of Garrick's house.

the troubles his peculiar position was beginning to expose him to. For if office was to bring with it the charm of authority, it was also to be accompanied with what was absolute torture to a sensitive mind—a shower of abuse, of coarse pamphlets, coloured by disappointment, spite, and envy. This, for a great part of his life, was the favourite shape of annoyance, and almost with the first day of his management, it began.* No man was ever so persecuted. Not less offensive was the anonymous and "friendly" advice of outsiders, who publicly thrust their counsel on him. One would speak very plainly of that "exorbitant and glaring passion, it is reported, you have for money;" and added that "on the least diminution of your enormous receipts, *you feel the greatest agonies.*" With something like the spirit of true prophecy, the same writer warned him against the airs and insubordination of actors, sure to be in store for him; hinted at Garrick's own extravagance in dress, requiring a new one every night, and gave a picture of Garrick's "lofty" manner, when, in a lower position, he was asked to take a part, "Name it no more! Another word that way makes me your mortal foe! Begone!" †

Another "hand" at the close of his first year's management had as freely canvassed what he had done. Why had he not opened with a new part, instead of with a prologue, printed and sold at sixpence; which was about as good as telling the public that he

* A complete collection of these "Garrick Pamphlets" would be curious. The British Museum is a very imperfect gathering, but whose number is still very considerable. Every "hack" whose play or offer of service was rejected took his revenge in a pamphlet.

† A letter to David Garrick, Esq., on his becoming manager of Drury Lane.

knew how grieved they were at his ceasing to speak it; and he must, at least, take that way of putting it in their reach. Mr. Garrick, it would seem, disdained to play, except for noble persons and people of quality. Then, as to reformation of the stage, and Garrick's profession of giving a moral tone, this critic would wish to know if "'The Scornful Lady and Parson Roger,' a scandalous and atheistical part," was a proper piece to offer to a decent audience—a question for which there might be some foundation. But it should be borne in mind that Garrick was hardly settled in his chair, and such a reformation could only be brought about gradually.

In September the theatre opened, and the fortunate manager had now a new player—one of the Palmers—a valuable recruit for the ranks of genteel comedy. Mrs. Cibber was aggrieved, and refused to play. At the other house Quin had come up from his retirement, and, helped by royal patronage, made one more expiring effort. He challenged Garrick in *Sir John Brute*, though admirers of both owned that nothing could be more distinct than the two readings. He was supported by the young Miss Bellamy, and by Woffington, for whom now there could be no place at Drury Lane.

The manager, whose marriage had been such a source of gossip, made his *rentrée* after the honeymoon on the 28th of September, and, with questionable taste, chose *Benedick* as the part in which to introduce himself. As he had intended, passages like "Here you may see Benedick, the married man!" "I may chance to have some odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me, because I have railed so

long against marriage;" — all excited the heartiest laughter and enjoyment. This restless craving to make the public partners in all his little domestic concerns, was one of Garrick's weaknesses, to the end. Still, it was impossible to make up for the absence of the plaintive Cibber, for whom a cold and impassive substitute was found in a Mrs. Ward. Unluckily for Barry, the loss fell heaviest on his plays. *Castalio*, *Romeo*, *Varennes*, were nothing without her; but Mrs. Pritchard was a host in *Lady Macbeth*, and in other parts of the same nature.

At this stage, we have a glimpse of Foote, and not a very favourable one. Indeed, it would seem that every occasion, where the manager was to come in contact with him, was to have its own disagreeable associations. This was only the beginning of the series. A dull play of Otway's, called "Friendship in Fashion," was being revived, to bring out Woodward, now returned from Dublin, and a rumour had reached Foote that Woodward was about, in stage slang, "to dress at him" in *Malagene*. Foote at once wrote, in a brusque and threatening tone, to the manager, speaking of Woodward as "a very contemptible friend" of his, and adding that *he* could have no dread from the manager's "passive wit," or the "actor's active humour:" but would just hint that he had by him "a plan for a short farce, that was to be wormwood to some, entertaining to many, and very beneficial to, sir, yours, S. Foote." In what shape the wormwood was to be administered, might be guessed from an insulting postscript, in which the popular jest at the manager's saving habits, was made to his very face. For he sent him back his free

admission to the theatre, saying that he would in future always pay his five shillings to the boxes, "*a sum not very contemptible to you.*"*

With perfect dignity, good humour, and much kind reasoning, Garrick wrote back, declining to interfere. He explained, that he knew not what views Woodward had in the business, who, for that matter, may have even intended "taking off" his own manager, whose full permission he had. As for calling Woodward "contemptible," that was surely a little indiscreet, considering what a dangerous rival of Foote's that actor had been. Besides, supposing he did "dress at him," was it not a compliment: for the character of *Malagene* is that of a very smart, pleasant, conceited little fellow, and a good mimic? Then, with unabated good humour he deals with the thrust about the five shillings: "If I had such a regard for five shillings, surely, then, my giving you the liberty of the house was a still greater favour." Foote, however, might have restrained his humour; for the play was a failure. About the fifth act the audience broke into something like a riot, to the infinite amusement of the French ambassador, who was present. It was noticed that it was only when some outrage was offered to the Royal Arms that the "foreigner" got alarmed and took flight.

* This unseemly squabble had begun early in the previous season, and was certainly brought on by Foote, who now, at the "49th day's sale" of his "Auction in the Hay," was running riot in personality. After the run of his "Auction," he had let his theatre to the professor of the well-known "Bottle Hoax," and the tone of the advertisement seems very much like one of Foote's own jests. A fellow got possession of the house, and issued this advertisement: "A person then and there will take a common walking-cane from any one of the spectators, on which he will play the music of every instrument then in use. He next will present a common wine bottle to be examined by the spectators. This bottle being placed on a table, he will then, without any equivocation, *go in to* it, and sing while there. During which time any

More pleasant is it, even by way of contrast, to see Garrick in his relations with a man like Hogarth—a very different character. The rude work of the theatre, and the rough passions of the green-room, had no effect on the manager's nature; and when the painter sent round to him, that he was aggrieved by his neglect, fancied or real, Garrick wrote an exquisite letter of excuse, which has an interest that reaches to other friendships. He knew what Montaigne had said, that a debtor and ledger account of "callings," &c., was a fatal sign of decaying regard, and could "cap" it by an instance of his experience. "Poor Draper, whom I loved better than any man breathing, once asked me smiling, 'how long is it since you were at my house—how long?' 'Why a month or six weeks.' 'A year and five days,' replied he; 'but don't imagine that I have kept an account; *my wife told me so this morning and bid me scold you for it.*'" In this there is dramatic effect and almost true pathos; "dear Draper's" speech has the air of one of Steele's little stories, and that it should have impressed Garrick so much, shows his native delicacy. "Could I follow my own wishes," he goes on, "I would see you every day in the week, and not care whether it was in Lei-

person may handle it, and see that it does not exceed a common tavern bottle." Foote had to disavow all connection with this imposture. A few days later he renewed his attacks, and, by desire, was to exhibit some "new lots,"—a Poet, a Beau, &c.—"two of which are original, the rest copies from the best masters." Among other things he mimicked the Italian singers, giving a concert between "two cats." Woodward on his benefit night attacked him, threatening him with "a dish of his own chocolate, with an addition of one mew at his cats." Foote at once retorted in the papers, that he had found the Italian cats would not do at the Hay, and had disposed of them to Drury Lane. He also promised a portrait of Harry the Smuggler, "as he lookod at his trial." This was surely an indecent personality, and later he promised "A Smuggling Epilogue, called 'Tit for Tat; or, the Smuggler foiled.'"

cester Fields or Southampton Street." With this sweet and affectionate tone it was no wonder the actor was making many and fast friends.

I find among his papers a curious letter of Hogarth's, of a later date, quite characteristic—with some rhymes on a shabby baronet, who had backed out of an order. They were addressed to Dr. Hay, who sent them on to Garrick. "Notwithstanding," wrote Hogarth, "I was sensible what you said to me at Mr. Parry's proceeded from friendship, I could not help being more affected by it, than by Sir Richard's refusal of the picture—as you may see by my sitting down to scribble the following foolish verses, turned into English by my friend Whitehead." They are rude and characteristic lines—full of bitterness. He complains of being forced

"To lose two hundred quiet days
Of certain gain, for doubtful praise.
When a new piece is tortured forth,
'Tis hard to fix upon its worth.
Because you find no copied line,
Or colours from the canvas shine—
The picture can't be right, you're sure.
But say, my friend, or connoisseur,
Why doth it touch the heart much more
Than picture ever did before?

* * * *

Confest by even Sir, himself;
But used as plea to save his pelf—
I have his letter on my shelf.
Which plea, if 'twas ever given,
Is a most curious one, by Heaven!
For living artists ne'er were paid . . .
As Raphael, Rubens, Guido, Reni—
'Twas this, indeed, that drew me in.
Howe'er, I wish you'd understand,
On this I ground my whole demand."

Garrick now felt it was time to introduce a novelty, and he brought out a cold declamatory piece

entitled "Edward the Black Prince," by a Mr. Shirley, and which was one of the long series of bald, dreary, tedious plays, constructed on the French model, which were to be such a feature of his management. There seems to have been but the one strict pattern for these chilling dramas, and we look back wearily to the long procession of Roman generals, sultans, Greek matrons, Persian kings, and mythological heroes, whose costume, feelings, and religion, wrapped in hopeless mists, become removed from all dramatic interest and sympathy. How the taste of the audiences already trained by Garrick's nature, and above all how Garrick's own pure and healthy taste, could have relished these cold abstractions, these colourless heroes, fetched out of the Roman History; how people could have crowded to hear scraps of Plutarch dramatized, and chapters out of the History of the Turks and Davila's Wars, made into tragedies, seems now a surprising mystery.

The only other feature of the season was his giving a benefit to a grand-daughter of Milton—an old Mrs. Forster—who had lingered on, to the surprise of all. Another instance of his good nature, though in a different direction, was his playing *Hamlet* to Mrs. Clive's *Ophelia* on the night of her benefit, that vivacious lady winding up the night with a farce of her own composition. But the manager was to have early experience of the troubles which the rule of a green-room brings with it, and which, in his instance, were to be more vexatious than ever waited on manager. It would seem as though his known moderation and superiority to the mean passions that reign behind the curtain, offered tempting inducements to malcontents.

What were Barry's grievances—how small and petty, and almost ludicrous—may be gathered from his written complaints on another occasion, when he again tried the forbearance and unruffled good temper of his master. Yet to Barry Garrick had behaved professionally in what might be called "the handsomest way." He gave him up his own parts of *Hamlet*, *Lord Townly*, *Othello*, *Romeo*, and *Macbeth*. To Barry had been given *Henry the Fifth*, while the manager was content with the part of the *Chorus*. Still the actor began to take airs, and ill-health was often put forward as an excuse for gratifying his humours. He took the unusual course of addressing the public at the top of the playbills, that whereas it had been industriously given out in order to prejudice Mr. Barry, that he had of late frequently refused to act when his health permitted, he took the opportunity of saying, that "he scorned all trick and evasion," and that *nothing* but illness should ever cause him to fail in his duty. He could not endure the manager's *Hamlet* drawing more than his. He pettishly demanded that he might choose his own nights, which Garrick, with unruffled good humour, at once conceded. But nothing could satisfy this spoiled "lover" of the stage. When the season closed in May, Garrick had played about eighty times, and Barry fully sixty.

At the beginning of the new season these discontents had ripened into a regular confederacy, and Garrick found himself suddenly deserted by his two chief supports.* Barry actually broke his articles, and

* Scandal tried to supply other motives for this separation. It has been said that Mrs. Garrick received a letter from some secret admirer a few weeks after her marriage, and that Garrick succeeded in tracing it to Barry. This is

Mrs. Cibber, in deep resentment, engaged with him, at the other house. This was a gloomy prospect.

Quin, Barry, Woffington, Cibber, and Macklin, made up a strong host, especially, as it fell out curiously, that each one of the party was inflamed by a separate and personal hostility to Garrick. Woffington felt that her charms had lost their spell—no fury can match that of 'a woman scorned;' Cibber was full of theatrical jealousy of a rival; Barry furious at oppression on the part of one he considered an inferior. Macklin's was the bitterest hate of all. Quin, alone, had a manly, blunt, honorable hostility. Garrick had again made him offers, but he refused. It was said, indeed, that Rich was paying him a thousand a-year. Still Garrick was not dismayed. He had only Woodward, Clive, and Pritchard to count on. But, in truth, he always felt, as he wrote later to one of his rebellious actresses, that he himself was the strength of the theatre; and where the line was giving way, his own presence might be estimated like Napoleon's on a campaign—as equal to forty thousand. He had, besides, Mrs. Ward, and the new actress from the Dublin stage, Miss Bellamy, whom he was training.*

It was thought that Drury Lane must go down before this dangerous opposition. The revolters had ready a grand *coup*, with which they thought he would be overwhelmed. At Drury Lane no play had

Lee Lewes's absurd account of this transaction. Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 89. The extraordinary verbiage, and the way in which a little fact which has been told to him is expanded into pages of actual dialogue, supplied from his own brain, make his book almost valueless. Facts that are more simply stated prove to be either false or perverted.

* Mrs. Ward proved a failure—was cold and indifferent; and during one of his grandest and most impassioned bursts in "The Fair Penitent," was seen carelessly fastening her glove!

drawn so well as "Romeo and Juliet," and now, with the charming Cibber and Barry, and Rich's tact and magnificence in *spectacle*, it was supposed they would draw the whole town. Garrick had actually trained the two deserters himself in that tender play. But he had early information of the scheme, and secretly instructed Miss Bellamy in *Juliet*, while he carefully prepared *Romeo* himself.*

While the town was forecasting the certain ruin of Garrick and his theatre, he opened his doors early in September, and pleasantly gossipped with the house before the curtain rose on "The Merchant of Venice." With fair humour he smartly glanced at the deserters :—

> "Some few there are whom paltry passions guide,
> Desert each day, and fly from side to side ;
> Others, like Swiss, love fighting as their trade,
> For beat or beating, they must all be paid."

And he then made a very plain and significant announcement as to what would be the future policy of the theatre. He reminded the town, as he had done at the opening of the house, that with them rested the choice and character of the entertainments. No manager could reform the stage and keep up a series of pure and classic shows, at a heavy loss to himself. The most he could do was to try the experiment. He was consistent, for at

* Verses were of course going round on the coming struggle :—

> "One great Goliath, Gath could boast
> The Philistines of yore,
> But Covent Garden's threat'ning host
> Boasts one Goliath more.
> Yet fear not, ye of Drury Lane,
> By little champion led—
> Their two Goliaths roam in vain,
> While David's at your head."

the beginning, he had hinted that on these classic boards Hunt might yet box, or Mahomet dance; so that—

"If an empty house, the actor's curse,
Shows us our *Lears* and *Hamlets* lose their force,
Unwilling we must change the nobler scene,
And in our turn present you *Harlequin*.
Quit poets, and set carpenters to work,
Show gaudy scenes, or mount the vaulting Turk.
For though we actors, one and all agree
Boldly to struggle for our—vanity;
If want comes in, misfortune must retreat—
Our first great ruling passion is—to eat!"

This was perfectly reasonable, and three years was a handsome time to allow for the experiment. Some of the small wits affected to decry the tone of self-sufficiency in this programme, and gave a sort of translation into plain unvarnished prose. "It is true there is a formidable force against me at the other house, yet I am so possessed with the spirit of my own merit, that I am pretty sure I shall be a match for them all. This Drury Lane stage, of which I am now the monarch, is the only stage in the world; but if two or three of Shakspeare's plays, which I have given you over and over again every season, don't bring full houses, I must e'en turn Harlequin and set up pantomimes."

The other house opened later, and Barry gave *his* address. He was not slow to retort, and from the boards defended himself, telling his audience that—

"When kings allow no merit but their own,
Can it be strange that men for flight prepare,
And seek to raise a colony elsewhere?"

And with yet more personality, added:

"For, *entre nous*, these managers of merit,
Who fearless arm, and take the field with spirit,
Others can torture twenty thousand ways,
Make bouncing Bajazet retire for Bayes.
The ladies, too, with every power to charm,
Have felt the fury of a tyrant's arm."

The insinuation that Garrick engrossed all the acting, as we have seen, was perfectly untrue; and the stroke about his treatment of the actresses, an unworthy appeal to the prejudices of an audience. At the end of September, Covent Garden played its trump card—the new "Romeo and Juliet"—but they must have been disagreeably surprised by seeing an *affiche* at the other house of the same play, for the very same night. The languid town hailed the promised contest as a new excitement, and on the 28th the struggle began.* The Covent Garden bill ran:—

By the COMPANY of COMEDIANS.
At the THEATRE-ROYAL *in Covent Garden,*
This present Friday, being the 28*th of Sept.* 1750, *will be represented a Play, call'd*
ROMEO AND JULIET.
The Part of *Romeo* to be performed
By Mr. BARRY,
(Being the first time of his appearing on that stage.)
And the Part of *Juliet* to be performed
By Mrs. CIBBER.
An additional scene will be introduced, representing
The Funeral Procession of JULIET,
Which will be accompanied with
A SOLEMN DIRGE,
The Music composed by Mr. ARNE.
With an occasional Prologue to be spoken
By Mr. BARRY.
Boxes, 5*s.*—Pit, 3*s.*—Gal. 2*s.*—Upper Gal. 1*s.*
PLACES for the BOXES to be taken of Mr. PAGE, at the Stage-door of the THEATRE.
To begin exactly at Six o'Clock.

Though there was a loud division of opinion and affectation of equal merit, and even superiority claimed for Garrick, there can be no question but that the Covent Garden performance was the best. Miss

* Murphy is, therefore, mistaken in saying it began in October. Davies mistakes the year.

Bellamy could hardly hope to equal the trained Mrs. Cibber. The handsome figure, the exuberant passion; of the Covent Garden *Romeo* were dangerous advantages, and the genius of the incomparable pair acting and reacting on each other, must have had its effect. Garrick was said to have worked out new "points," and fresh readings; but as his figure was inferior, and his expressive face a little too much marked for the soft interest of a lover—it is likely that his was more an elaborate and clever "reading" than the natural and impassioned conception of the other. It is hard, however, to get an impartial view. Mr. Taylor heard that Garrick was considered superior. Miss Bellamy says that Barry was held to be the better—except in the scene with the *Friar*. As the matter was turned into a party question, the voice of the town does not go for much. Garrick's friends even tried to compromise the dispute, by giving Barry the palm in the first three acts—his melting eyes, plaintiveness of voice, and "the amorous harmony of his features," were set against the grace of his rival's attitudes, the vivacity and fire of his expressions. It was nicely and accurately decided, that Barry was superior in the garden scene of the second act, and Garrick in the scene with the *Friar;* Barry again superior in the other garden scenes, and Garrick in the portrait of the *Apothecary;* Barry was also preferred in the first part of the tomb, and Garrick in the dying part. Some said that Barry was an Arcadian, Garrick a fashionable, lover. But the best test is, that after an interval Garrick, with that excellent good sense which distinguished every act of his, quietly dropped the part out of his *repertoire*. Even "Gentleman" Smith, a good

judge, and a partial friend of Garrick's, owned that the victory was with Barry. The ladies protested, that in the balcony scene they could have wished Garrick to jump up to them, but that they could have jumped down to the Covent Garden *Romeo;* and, with the true method of a public *fureur*, amateurs would go and hear the first part of the play at one theatre, and hurry away for the conclusion at the other.

Woodward was the Drury Lane *Mercutio*—far superior in his vivacity and eccentricity to Macklin at the other house. Rich, hankering after harlequinades, had a "grand funeral procession," which cost a great deal of money. Garrick had his procession also, but without any flourish; it came, therefore, as a surprise, and was doubly acceptable. The public were interested for a few days, and epigrams fluttered about plentifully. Some of them verged on wit; as the well known one, by Mr. Hewitt, Sterne's friend:—

"'Well, what's to night?' said angry Ned,
As up from bed he rouses;
'*Romeo* again!' and shakes his head,
'A plague o' both your houses.'"

Another, not suspected to come from Garrick's own pen, was written on his strange principle of ridiculing himself, to prevent others from ridiculing him:—

"So reversed are the notions of *Capulet's* daughters,
One loves a whole length, and the other three-quarters."

Which he put also into another shape:—

"Fair *Juliet* at one house exclaims with a sigh,
'No *Romeo's* clever that's not six feet high.'
Less ambitiously t'other does *Romeo* adore,
Though in size he scarce reaches to five feet four."*

* These lines he gave himself to Mr. Cooke.

This was only a fresh shape of the childish self-depreciation, "our Little Stage Hero," "Little Roscius," and the like, which by this time, at least, it would have been more dignified to have done with.

The foolish contest was carried on for twelve nights,* until the town grew tired, and the houses thin. Rich was the first to give way, gladly seizing on the excuse of Mrs. Cibber's illness. The ladies were thought to have been fairly enough matched—Mrs. Cibber thrilling all hearts in passages where grief and despair were concerned, Miss Bellamy acting naturally, and with infinite fervour and passion, in the love scenes. She had youth on her side—that cruel and unfair advantage—so precious on the stage. Garrick enjoyed a little triumph in giving his play one night more, and concluded the contest with an epilogue, in which he sent out Mrs. Clive to say of himself:

"Oh, 'tis a pretty youth!
'Tis true he's of a choleric disposition,
And fiery parts make up his composition.
How have I seen him rave when things miscarried;
Indeed, he's grown much tamer since he married.
* * * *
So much for him.
The other youth comes next,
Who shows by what he says, poor soul, he's vext.
He tells you tales, how cruelly *this* treats us,
To make you think the little monster beats us.
Warned, I have believed, in melancholy phrase,
How *Bouncing Bajazet* retreats from *Bayes*,
I, who am woman, would have stood the fray,
At least, not snivelled thus, and run away.
In fact, there has some little bouncing been,
But who the bouncer was, inquire within.
No matter who—I now proclaim a peace,
And hope henceforth hostilities will cease.
No more shall either rack his brain to tease ye,
But let the contest be, who most shall please ye."

There was good humour as well as good sense in

* Murphy says twenty nights; and Davies puts the wrong year.

this reply to Barry's spite; for even upon his footlights Garrick could retain the charm of moderation and temper, and never, by bitter speech, or compromising act of enmity, put off reconciliation, or shut the door finally against renewed friendship. In the numerous quarrels (invariably fastened on him), he always preserved this *undertone*, as it were, which was of infinite value to him; and though it made some enemies who had not the same restraint, it saved to him many friends.

Even at the other house, Mr. Garrick's good fortune attended him. The only bond of that stormy and dangerous confederacy was their hostility to him. By their own intestine disputes and jealousies, they were presently in almost ludicrous confusion. They despised their manager; and he made no account of them. Quin and Barry were at war;* Woffington and Cibber held each other in the highest contempt; and though a round of the finest and most classical pieces were given, there was so much uncertainty, so many postponements and disputes, that the public grew angry. Cibber was ill, or, it was charitably said, pretended to be ill; Barry had his chronic fits of hoarseness, or, as it was said again, pretended hoarseness; but Woffington, with true and gallant spirit, and that loyalty to duty, in which she was never known to fail, was always at her post. At last even her patience gave way. It was not uncommon to have one of the great tragedies, with the names of Quin, Cibber, and Barry, announced for a future night—when from some quarrel or sham illness behind the

* At rehearsal Barry would be absent, which Quin would take for a slight, and be absent in *his* turn on the next occasion.

curtain, the play would be suddenly altered, and Mrs. Woffington, in some of her dashing parts, substituted. To this she submitted for a time, but warned them, if it was repeated, she would not be thus played upon. It happened again, and she refused to go on. The public unjustly made her a victim,—flung orange-peel, and bade her ask pardon, which she proudly and disdainfully refused to do.* The scene was indeed a picture. She stood there, as *Lady Jane Grey*, "looking more beautiful than ever; her anger gave a glow to her complexion, and even added lustre to her charming eyes." She treated them with sovereign scorn, and when they would not hear her, walked away. Then they roared for her, and she came back—told them bluntly she would play or not, just as they pleased,—it was a matter of perfect indifference to her. They might say on, or off, as they liked. There was a shout of "On!" During this very season this honest actress actually painted her handsome face with wrinkles and crows' feet, to give effect to a play of Shakspeare's. Under such conditions even so "strong" a company could not play well together. The plays, too, were absurdly cast.† Before long

* She was never thought to play more finely, than when she thus defied the angry pit, treating their rudeness with contempt.

† We have a graphic portrait, which may do as pendant for the one given before by Cumberland. Quin, past sixty, old, "battered," and uncouth, was playing *Young Chamont* in a long, grisly, half-powdered old periwig, hanging low down on each side of the breast, and down the back; a heavy scarlet coat and waistcoat, trimmed with broad gold lace; black velvet breeches, a black silk neckcloth, black stockings, a pair of square-toed shoes, with an old-fashioned pair of stone buckles. He had stiff, high-topped white gloves, and a broad, old, scolloped laced hat; he was, besides, very corpulent, and much out of shape. Ryan, another old veteran, was the strong and lusty *Polydore*, "with a red face, and voice truly horrible." He was not nearly so well dressed as Quin, though in the same fantastic style. Beside these two, stood Barry, in all his elegance, youth, and beauty, "in a neat bag-wig" of the

came the usual symptoms of disorganisation—appeals to the public in the papers. By-and-by Quin was "much hissed," in *King Richard.* The two leading actresses, Woffington and Cibber, still showed their dislike and jealousy, exhibited under the restraints of contemptuous looks and speeches—to the enjoyment of the manager, who called them his Sarah Malcolm and his Catherine Hayes, two infamous women who had been hanged; and in this disorder the theatre was not prospering.

Garrick always had really good pieces in reserve, and could vary his *carte* with one of Cibber's capital comedies, "Love's Last Shift," produced nearly sixty years before, a revival the author actually lived to see, which had true stuff in it, if not wit, the likeness of wit, and became a stock-piece. A strange apathy seemed to come over manager Rich, and he did not even have recourse to the unfailing attraction, in which he was believed to be unapproached. Yet even in this department his supremacy was now to be attacked, in a way he little dreamed of.

prevailing cut and fashion; and the charming Cibber, all elegance and refinement. This extraordinary contrast of the old and new school must have been highly diverting; and it is most graphically described by Wilkinson, who was looking on. Justice has scarcely been done to Ryan's merit. Garrick once going with Woodward to see his *Richard*, with a view of being amused, owned that he was astonished at the genius and power he saw struggling to make itself felt through the burden of ill-training, uncouth gestures, and an ungraceful and slovenly figure. He was generous enough to own, that all the merit there was in his own playing of *Richard*, he had drawn from studying this less fortunate player. Mrs. Bellamy and Wilkinson both mention this acknowledgment, to detract from Garrick's merit; but forget that, in another direction, they are adding to it.

CHAPTER IV.

PANTOMIME.—FOREIGN TRAVEL.—MOSSOP.

1750—1752.

THE name of Rich should be dear to all pantomime-goers; and the rows of little ones, that line the front seats at Christmas, taught who their benefactor was. There were pantomimes indeed before his day,—so early as the year 1700; but it was Rich, both as player and writer, who made that sort of piece respectable. It was in 1717 that we find his name conspicuously associated with a *Féerie*, called "Harlequin Executed!" He was a strange being, and curious manager, but, beyond question, the most original and vivacious of Harlequins.

A harlequinade then consisted of two portions—one serious and the other comic; the serious portion being a story selected from, perhaps, Ovid's "Metamorphoses," and set off with all magnificence of scenery, rich dresses, pretty music, and grand dances. At intervals, during the progress of the fable, Harlequin and his company came on, and with diverting tricks and changes, varied the story; carrying on, in short, a sort of underplot. The whole then was more symmetrical than the modern, and rather disjointed plan, of tacking the harlequinade to an opening *spectacle*. Rich, from some affectation, would not appear under his own name, but was always set down in the bills

as "Mr. Lun." He was not a little eccentric, and had a dialect of his own, with an odd, blunt, "Abernethy" manner.*

The tone of these pieces was then purely rustic. The characters were farmers and village maidens; the scenes and changes were all taken from the country and farm-yard. There were louts and countrymen. Harlequin, in all sorts of disguises, "courting Columbine," was always pursued by the "village constables," whom he eluded with all manner of tricks and devices—so that the introduction of modern policemen is founded on strict tradition. A most effective scene was that of building a house, with the scaffolding set, the bricklayers busy, the hodmen ascending ladders; when suddenly Harlequin appears among them, with a touch pulls scaffolding, bricklayers, all down, and is discovered to have escaped in the confusion. One of the prettiest of modern pantomime effects, that of a house being slowly built before our eyes, is not therefore wholly new. Another "trick," that "made the whole house ring with applause," was Harlequin's coming on disguised as an ostrich, pecking at every one, biting the servants slyly, "kissing Columbine," and then finally "morricing off" the stage. The changes and transformations, too, were all after

* One of his own actors takes off his oddities for us excellently, and most dramatically. Rich had a kind of provincial dialect, and twisted names into special shape for himself. Wilkinson asked him to give a part to Ned Shuter. In reply, the manager took snuff, stroked his cat. "If I give it to Muster Shuttleworth, he will not let me teach him; but I will *larn* you, Muster Williamskin." Suddenly Younger, the prompter, entered hastily, and interrupted them. The manager turned on him in a rage,—"Get away, Muster Youngmore; I am teaching Muster Whittington." Then, trying to get the actor to sign articles, he warned him against Barry, whom he called Muster Barleymore, and told him he had no chance from Muster Griskin, which was his name for Garrick.

the modern pattern; and, at a touch of the wand, palaces changed into huts. But more remarkable metamorphoses were the sudden change of men and women into "stools and wheelbarrows," of long colonnades into beds of tulips, and of shops into serpents. This might be worthy the notice of modern managers, though we may indeed suspect that at this stage of the carpenter's art, the change was effected clumsily enough, and with more than the customary flapping and hitching. Sometimes Harlequin would ride in on a broom, and a magic transformation take place, which now appears of a very humble order — the garden wall changing into a wall covered with prints, ballads, broadsides, &c.; and Harlequin disguised as an old woman, selling them; not to mention the "delightful perspective of a farmhouse, where you hear the coots in the water, as at a distance." There were yet more adventures of the same sort, and finally a sort of "transformation scene" was discovered; a glittering perspective of pillars and temples. At the end, however, a strange retribution was made to overtake Harlequin, who was carried off like Don Giovanni, *upwards*, to the infernal regions, surrounded with fire and demons.

Ladies and gentlemen were allowed to crowd behind the scenes on benefit nights; but on pantomime nights this privilege was suspended, as might be seen from a notice at the bottom of the bill: "As any obstruction in the movements of the machinery will greatly prejudice the performance of the entertainment, it is hoped that no gentleman will take it amiss the being refused admittance behind the scenes. Ladies are requested to send their servants by three

o'clock." In another piece there was an "effect" of the sun rising, which was a "superb and complicated piece of machinery,"—though how such effects were produced in these pre-gaseous days, seems a mystery. Daphne was turned into a tree in the presence of the audience, which was a good surprise. The tossing of Harlequin in a blanket was a comic incident, and delighted the galleries; but they did not see that he was supported in two long slips all the time.

Two seasons before, "Perseus and Andromeda" had been produced at Covent Garden, with a French M. La Maze as a *petit maître*. Here there was one grand scene—a dome that rose slowly, and *Perseus* riding his fiery horse in the air, and attacking the dragon. This was done by fixing him to a revolving wheel, a device introduced at our great theatres only a year or two ago. One night the pulleys broke, the wheel gave way, and *Perseus* was flung down upon the stage, but without injury.* In "The Emperor of the Moon" was a "tapestry scene," in which human figures imitated the arrangement on Bayeux and other tapestries, a very elegant and French notion, but quite too refined for our modern galleries.

A piece called "The Genii" seems to have quite dazzled the critics; for the "reporter" of a journal bearing the odd name of "THE SCOURGE" must say that, "for propriety of *musick*, beauty of scenery, elegance of dress, it exceeds all the boasted grandeur

* There was *acting* then even in the conventional Harlequin. One of Rich's famous effects was "the hatching of Harlequin by the heat of the sun, a master-piece in dumb-show—from the first chipping of the egg, his receiving of motion, his feeling of the ground, his standing upright, his quick Harlequin trip round the empty shell—every limb had its tongue—every motion a voice." Dramatic genius triumphed *then* over every constraint.

of 'Harlequin Sorcerer,' or of any I have seen, separate or collective. The last scene beggars all description. The most romantic Eastern account of sumptuous palaces are but faint to this display of beauty, this glow of light, this profusion of glittering gems." Such was pantomime in 1750.

The time for the carpenters to take possession of Drury Lane stage had arrived, and Garrick, perfectly consistent with all his declarations and principles, finding the public would not follow him in the correct and classical path, determined to let it have its way. Indeed, the houses were growing thin, and he himself, always a source of attraction, could not play every night. He therefore set to work diligently, and Boxing-night of this year—1750—was celebrated with a gorgeous pantomime, in "Italian grotesque characters," called "Queen Mab," in which Woodward came bounding on as Harlequin. It was a marvellous spectacle—comprising gorgeous decorations, and a "great pomp of machinery." It drew all the town, and made Rich, thus attacked with his own weapons, tremble. Henceforward a pantomime became the regular Christmas feature at Drury Lane. This ran forty nights—a curious instance of the good fortune that attended all Garrick's schemes; for a harlequinade would seem to have been totally foreign to his tastes and experience. That the public felt, and enjoyed, this success was evidenced by a caricature called "The Theatrical Steel-yard," in which Mrs. Cibber, Barry, Quin, and Mrs. Woffington are exhibited as hanging in a row at one end of the yard, and Garrick sits gaily and triumphantly in the other scale, waving his cap triumphantly, and weighing all four down; while

Woodward in his proper dress, and *Queen Mab*, "strike" the traditional harlequin attitude, in the centre of the back-ground.*

During this season, there was actually a daughter of the great Farquhar's alive, and in greatly reduced circumstances. Even to that generation, who saw Mrs. Woffington in her great part of *Sir Harry*, and who enjoyed the exquisite humour of his fine comedy, it must have been a surprise to hear that there was such a link between them and the great humourist. Garrick paid a graceful tribute to his memory, by giving his daughter a benefit at Drury Lane, and by acting himself in the appropriate "Beaux' Stratagem." He was always full of such charity in his professional dealings, and the bills of his theatre show innumerable notices of this pattern, "For the benefit of a widow of a reduced citizen," &c. He had also given certain evidence of his steady purpose to reform his stage, even at some pecuniary sacrifice, and had the courage to abolish a time-honoured custom which obliged managers on Lord Mayor's day to give their audience a coarse old play called "The London Cuckolds," and which seemed to be about as appropriate as "George Barnwell" was to Boxing-night.

In March, 1751, Drury Lane was to witness an unusual spectacle—perhaps the most remarkable, as well as the boldest venture, known to the amateur stage. Such interest and curiosity was excited by this performance, that the House of Commons adjourned at three o'clock to attend early. The Delaval family—men about town, bitten with a taste for acting—had

* Davies, consistently inaccurate even in such trifles, puts Woodward in the scale.

performed "Othello" at Lord Mexborough's and were fired with a desire for a larger field of action. In those days, even a small theatre would have been sufficient publicity, but to venture on the large expanse of the Drury Lane stage seemed almost too daring. Garrick, one of whose little weaknesses was an inclination to favour anything associated with persons of quality, interrupted his regular performances, and allowed his theatre to be used for the night.* Never was there such magnificence. No expense was spared. The distinctions of pit and gallery were abolished, and all parts of the house indifferently, shone with laces and jewels, and costly dresses. Even in the footmen's gallery, it was noted that half a dozen stars were glittering; every part of the house overflowed with the best "quality" in London; the Royal princes, with some German ones—rarely absent from any Court show in England—were in the side boxes. All these glories were lit up by the soft effulgence of waxlights. On the stage there were fresh scenes, and new, and gorgeous dresses. The music was excellent. The scene outside the playhouse is described to have been almost ludicrous from the confusion, and block of chairs and coaches, which impeded each other from getting near the door; and the mob were delighted at seeing fine ladies and gentlemen picking their steps through the mud and filth. Even at the mean public-houses close by, lords, in stars and garters and silk stockings, were seen waiting until the street should clear a little. Sir Francis Delaval's performance excited

* Boaden says, gravely, "it is to be hoped for some charitable purpose;" but the tickets were all complimentary.

great admiration.* The expenses, as may be imagined, were enormous. Garrick received £150 for his theatre, and the dresses, scenery, "waxlights," cost upwards of a thousand pounds.

He had also produced two new plays, one "Gil Blas," by his friend Moore, which was a failure,† and "Alfred," "a masque," written by the notorious Mallet. The distraction at the other house came to a point at the end of the season, when Quin, at last, made his final bow as a salaried actor, in the "Fair Penitent," having however met many mortifications during the season. Woffington left them in disgust, and went away to Dublin, where she was received rapturously. The manager of Drury Lane was now fairly entitled to his holiday.

In the summer of this year Mr. and Mrs. Garrick undertook what might be called their wedding trip, thus delayed for nearly two years, and set off for Paris.‡ But this first French visit appears to have had no special glories. The details are meagre, or perhaps his splendid reputation had not yet travelled

* "So unlike all imitation," says Kirkman, who gives these particulars, "that the audience could not be easily reconciled afterwards to the hearing it from any one else. His embracing *Desdemona*, on their meeting in Cyprus, *set many a fair breast among the audience a palpitating*." It was remarked of one of the actors that "his eye worked as much as his tongue, and he was equally intent upon his plots when engaged in the dialogue, as when out of it"—"— Delaval, Esquire," gained great applause in *Cassio*, and Mrs. Quon had "all the native honesty and candour in her face that the poet meant to make an example of." All the actors, in fact, were natural, easy, and unaffected —"free from the *whine*, the *mouthing*, the clap-trap trick, and the false consequence so often hackneyed upon the stage." The dresses, which were much praised for their taste and elegance, were highly characteristic, being said to be "well fancied, and *adapted to the characters*," which faithful adaptation was carried out in this fashion:—*Othello* wore a Moorish dress, *Roderigo an elegant modern suit*, and *Cassio* and *Iago very rich uniforms*.

† It was dismissed with a pleasant epigram. "J'ai vu Gil Blas—Hélas!"

‡ Neither Murphy nor Davies mention this visit, and Boaden fixes it in 1752.

to the French.* Even Dangeau, that surprising courtier, who so carefully set down the minutest detail connected with the Court, in the most marvellous and voluminous of journals, makes no note of our English actor's presentation to the King. Such a freak may have seemed to him too dreadful a profanation to be recorded. We have one little scrap of criticism which shows that the chief thought in his mind, was the curious folly that seemed to seize on our countrymen when they went abroad. "You ask me how I like France. It is the best place in the world for a visit. The great fault of our countrymen is that they do not mix with the natives. *I did.*" † And, as may be conceived, he enjoyed himself in proportion. Among the Parisians, with whom age is so serious a matter, he passed for thirty-two, though he was some three years over that. At home he would have no such unpleasant fiction; and he wrote to his brother—"set my age down as it is in the Bible." A little story used to be told of an adventure which befell him in Paris.‡

In the Dover mail he met a friend of his—a Sir George Lewis—and they travelled on to Paris together. On arriving, Sir George went to lodgings in the Chaussée D'Antin, and for some weeks Garrick never met him. He then went to inquire, and was shocked to hear that he had been murdered—murdered, too, in the Forest of Bondy, so famous in melodrama. The

* In the unpublished journal of his later journey he writes, "I shall say very little of France, as I have done it well, though slightly, in my first journey in 1751." This journal has been lost.

† Hill MS.

‡ The authority for this is very indifferent—being merely a newspaper. It passed to the newspaper from some French Memoirs. The name of the baronet and the portrait-painter give a circumstantial air.

luckless Englishman had been invited to join a French shooting party at a chateau, had won some money, had set off by night, and had been found lying in the forest. The police were content to accept the notorious character of the forest, as a solution of the mystery; but Garrick, knowing his friend was a man of courage, who would have defended himself, and finding that the robbers had left him his diamond snuff-box and ring, became suspicious. He pressed the matter so earnestly that the lieutenant of police was persuaded to inquire what company had been at the chateau on that night. It was found that an Italian count had left about the same time as the Englishman, and had been about a couple of hours away. He was arrested: but interest was being used to set him free, when Garrick is said to have put in action one of those dramatic *ruses*, or *tours de force*, of which so many, and so many odd shapes, are associated with his name. At his request the accused was brought to Sir George's hotel. He was there suddenly told that the Englishman was alive; who, though wounded, had accused him, and demanded that he should be brought to his bedside. Garrick had studied a portrait of the Baronet, by Latour, and knew his expression well. When the assassin was introduced he saw, as he fancied, his victim in bed, ghastly and suffering, who addressed him in a trembling voice—"Wretch, do you deny your crime now?" He fell on his knees at once and confessed all. This story belongs to a whole family of such stories.

It was a great distinction for an English actor to be presented to the King, which was duly noted by the English papers, or which, perhaps,

Mr. Garrick took care *should* be noted.* The two clever Englishmen, Foote and Garrick, had met in Paris; but we know nothing of their proceedings.† This *villeggiatúra* brought about a renewal of their "fitful intimacy,"—it was never difficult to renew an intimacy with Garrick. And the first proof of this renewed intimacy was presently to be seen, to Foote's advantage, on the manager's return, in the production of the little comedy of "Taste."

Though the manager had been so far, and with ease to himself, victorious over the Covent Garden confederacy, he felt that his ranks were thin, and promptly engaged some new players, who brought good reputations from Dublin. Among these were Dexter and Ross; but the most remarkable was Mossop, an iron-throated tragedian. He was a man of education,—reared in Trinity College, Dublin, which had thus turned out no less than four first-class tragedians,—gifted with a strong and unmelodious declamation and a physical strength that would have carried him through such tremendous parts as *Sir Giles* or *Richard*. But his action was singularly

* Mr. Fitzpatrick, then over in Dublin "on business," where he found "humbugging in high taste," and who was pining to go back to the Bedford, had remarked an odd coincidence, that on the day that Garrick was presented, Quin had been stopped by a highwayman on Hounslow Heath. "So different,' he said, sarcastically, "is the fate of real and imaginary heroes." Foote, says Mr. Forster, used to tell this story himself, and made some such odd comment on it as Fitzpatrick had done in Dublin. Foote said, it illustrated the different treatment reserved for the new and the old school of acting. He himself was something between both, as it were, a cross between a French courtier and a dashing English highwayman; but there were to be found people, like Mrs. Dodd, who would sooner have been stopped by any highwayman than be made "to stand" by Mr. Foote.

† True to their character in matter of dates, we find Murphy and Davies both astray as to Foote's movements. One sends him to France in 1753; the other in 1754.

ungraceful, suggesting so happily to Churchill the motions of a drill-sergeant, and in the more level passages, fell into the wearying monotony which was the curse of old stage declamation. He was a valuable recruit.* Garrick allowed him to come forward in his own great part of *Richard*, in which his tremendous energy brought him success. The town came rushing to see him. It was assumed, as of course, that Garrick was dying with secret spleen and envy; and when a green-room wit repeated to him some verses on the new actors,—

> "The Templars they cry Mossop,
> The ladies they cry Ross up,
> But which is the best, is a toss up,"—

a very natural smile on his part was given out as an intense relish and enjoyment of "the sneer," and the author transferred into an obsequious courtier, who had made the lines to curry favour with the manager. There was neither "sneer," nor "relish," nor currying favour. The whole was a bit of green-room nonsense, for which Mossop's name, offering a facility for rhyming, was accountable. He was at first modest in his success, and judiciously advised by the manager to try gentlemanly parts, where there was a great opening. But very soon was to come the old suspicion, then jealousy, and the whispers of ill-natured friends that he was kept out of "roaring" and tempestuous parts by the manager's envy.

Miss Bellamy, aided by what old-fashioned writers were fond of calling "an agreeable figure," continued

* The blundering of Garrick's two biographers, where dates are concerned, has been noticed before. Murphy puts Mossop's appearance in September, 1752. Davies says it was about two years after the "Romeo and Juliet" contest.

to attract. She, too, began to contribute her share to the manager's troubles, conceiving that every action of his was directed to annoy her, or gratify a deep-rooted spite; and it is almost amusing to see how she could twist even his most good-natured actions into evidence of this animosity. Yet his good-humour never varied, and the petulant young actress forfeited no advantage by her behaviour.* The record of her humours becomes almost amusing.

There were indifferent houses, except on nights when the manager played. He brought out the fine, solemn tragedy of "The Mourning Bride," with Miss Bellamy as *Almeria*. This was a fresh injury. She had sent to Dr. Young for his new piece, "The Brothers," to read over during her illness,—an irregular proceeding, considering the piece was not yet in rehearsal, and properly belonged only to manager and author. This she affected to believe infuriated Garrick, who, to punish her, gave the part of *Zara*, in "The Mourning Bride," to Mrs. Pritchard, whom he instructed in it, and *Almeria* to her. *Zara* was a true "tragedy queen," and as obviously the part for a stately Mrs. Pritchard, as *Almeria* for the young and pretty Miss Bellamy. This was a new offence.

Now he was to bring forward a most important revival; a play full of breadth, character, and wit, Ben Jonson's "Every Man in his Humour," a piece

* One night a butcher's wife fell asleep in the boxes, and begun muttering "Rumps and burrs!" As she slept, the associations of her husband's profession found their way into her dreams. It was notorious that the manager had an almost morbid horror of the slightest interruption during his acting, and these extraordinary sounds threw him into confusion. He called out sharply, "What is that?" forgot his part, and introduced rambling passages from other plays; all which the young actress maliciously records.

sufficiently classical to have a wholesome effect on the public. He first prepared it carefully for the stage, by a jealous pruning of everything old-fashioned, or likely to interfere with the easy progress of the story—which was indeed judicious preparation. But he also, according to his favourite practice, added a scene at the end of the fourth act, which really supplies "business," and heightens the interest.*

Never was play so perfectly "cast," or so diligently rehearsed. Garrick was suited to a nicety in *Kitely*, whose fitful changes and passions, gave him good scope for play of feature, and inflexions of voice. Woodward could not have had a finer part than *Bobadil*, nor *Bobadil* a finer actor; for it eminently fitted his solid and classical humour, a humour now lost to the stage. Indeed, it was long thought to have been his masterpiece. Yates, as *Brainworm*, Ross and Palmer as *Welbred* and *Young Knowell*, were all good selections, and the manager was fortunate enough to find actors, otherwise obscure, who made for themselves reputations, in even the minor parts of this great play.

In the green-room Garrick trained them himself, teaching them his own readings and inflections. These Woodward appeared to adopt with much humility. But one morning during the manager's absence, Woodward, in unusual spirits, undertook to give his brethren a specimen of the way he meant to deal with his part on the night in question, which was wholly different from the one in which he had been so care-

* It is instructive to see with what tact and delicacy this task has been performed. Davies, as usual, astray in dates, antedates the production of this piece by nearly two years.

fully instructed. During this performance, Garrick arrived unperceived, and listened quietly. The way in which he treated this little bit of duplicity, is excellent testimony to his fairness and good humour. "Bravo, Harry," he cried, "upon my soul, bravo! Why now this is—no, no! I can't say this is *quite* my idea of the thing. Yours is, after all—to be sure rather—ha!" The actor was a little confused, and said, with true duplicity, that he meant to act the part according to the manager's views. "No, no! by no means, Harry," said the other, warmly; "you have actually clinched the matter. *But why, dear Harry, would you not communicate before?*" In that question was an epitome of all his managerial troubles. In the shifts and artful tricks of his actors, who assumed that his straightforwardness *must* be a cloak for shifts and ends like their own, he always felt the same friendly inquiry on his lips, "Why not communicate before?" Through the series of peevish complaints and fancied grievances, with which he was harassed, we almost hear him asking, in the same kind tone, "Why, instead of nursing these fancied wrongs, of brooding over imagined injuries, and acting on them as if they were true, not have come direct to *me?*" But to the end, he never could persuade his suspicious followers that he was sincere.

How the great actor looked as *Kitely*, and how he "dressed" the part, we can know from the fine picture by Reynolds, and from the mezzotint worthy of the picture—where we see him in his full Spanish cloak and white collar of many points, and slashed sleeves; where his expression is surprisingly altered by a short, dark wig, divided down the middle,

and "fuzzed out" at the sides. The play was acted with complete success—though it was said that the audience took some time before they could surmount the old-fashioned tone.* Yet while he paid this tribute to the fresh, open air of character and healthy humour, he was hankering after the insufferable stagy models, which were enough to stifle everything that was true or natural. Thus the very night before Ben Jonson's play, *Phœdra* and *Hippolytus* were ranting their mythological woes, and declaiming sorrows many thousand years old.

But he atoned for this, by presenting Foote's bright and lively comedy of "Taste." Its design was "to satirise the ignorant affectation with which the fashion of the day gave eager welcome to anything with the appearance of age upon it, and turned away scornfully from modern art, however meritorious." † With what wit and exuberant buoyancy he carried out that design, may be gathered from reading even a page of this little piece. All the essayists were busy with this popular fancy, which endured for many years, until Goldsmith's Mrs. Croker came home from the auction room, where the deaf Dowager was bidding away, against herself. Not the least part of the entertainment was Garrick's prologue; the only objection to

* It was performed in October, 1751, and introduced by a prologue of Whitehead's, which Murphy calls "neat," and which concluded with an invitation to

"Kindly forget the hundred years between,
Become old Britons and admire Old Ben."

A rhyme that scarcely deserves the praise of "neat." It was full, too, of such prose as the following:

"Sure to those scenes some honour should be paid,
Which Camden patronized, and Shakspeare played!"

† Forster, *Foote*, p. 378.

which was that it went over ground gone over in the piece itself. He came out in a wig, and professorial dress of black—as an auctioneer. Some of the strokes were exceedingly good:

"The fair one's heart will ne'er incline to man,
While thus they rage for China or Japan.
* * * *
Be not deceived: I here declare on oath,
I never yet sold goods of foreign growth;
Ne'er sent commissions out to Greece and Rome.
The best antiquities are made at home!
I've Romans, Greeks, Italians, near at hand,
True Britons all, and living in the Strand."

It is curious that refined satire on public foibles should never have "taken" on the English stage. The "groundlings" require something broader and less tedious: and the delicate and elaborate irony with which French dramatists have successfully ridiculed the vices of their city, in such pieces as "Le Demi Monde," "Les Effrontés," and the "Famille Benoiton," which have drawn the whole of Paris, seem scarcely to be relished in London. "Taste," therefore, though *Carmine* and *Lady Pentweazle* were entertaining to a degree, was but coldly welcomed, and did not run the regular "nine nights." This failure he tried to redeem, by yet another of the dreary "classical" pieces—a play by a heavy scholar, Dr. Francis, and constructed on the usual French model. This was called "Eugenia," which, after dragging through its nine nights, was laid to rest.

With the new season came a more important production; and Garrick, always true to his friends, brought out, in February, '52, Edward Moore's pathetic but lugubrious piece of the "Gamester;" with only

languid success. It was played but a few nights. The vice of gaming was then the "rage,"—its palace was "White's," where fortunes were won and lost; and from White's the town took its tone. Many a chariot, as was remarked in the play, might be said "to roll upon the four aces;" and even the most harmless shape of gambling took the shape of "pitting one man's life against another," so that, as the *Connoisseur* remarked, "a player perhaps is pitted against a duke, an alderman against a bishop, or a pimp against a privy councillor."

The town did not relish the unpleasant moral. The play, however, rallied after this neglect, as indeed was only natural, and has ever since kept the stage. For, when well acted, it presents a most affecting picture of domestic distress, working up to a close that is almost too real and harrowing. The art of the piece —as, indeed, would seem should be the art of every piece meant to reach the heart—lies in its mental action, its simple plot, and above all, in the quiet, almost *household* key in which it is set. The whole has a domestic unstagey air, and we might be looking on at some passage in our neighbour's everyday life. It is said that this drama marks an era in the stage, and this was the first tragedy that departed from the conventional garb of blank verse; it being assumed, on the authority of a tyrannical French tradition, that it was impossible to suffer or die, except to the stately measure of blank verse. It therefore has the same relation to the English stage that Victor Hugo's "Ernani" has to the French—a play over which the terrific battle of the classic and romantic schools was fought. Garrick touched it a good

deal, and is said to have added a whole scene in the fourth act.*

The month of March † brought a dreary play of Dr. Young's, of "Night Thoughts" celebrity. Livy was actually resorted to for the story of this heavy performance, and the audience saw such abstractions (such they were for stage purposes) as "Philip of Macedon," "Perseus and Demetrius," and "Erixenes," the Thracian princess;‡ masquerade across the stage. When Miss Bellamy appeared in the green-room, after her little "sulk," the manager said, "Ah! ah! madam, you are come at last! It is unfortunate for us that the Doctor insisted that you were to be his heroine." The pettish actress here affected to be indifferent, said that Pritchard would do it far better, and resigned it formally, to the consternation of Dr. Young, who protested against such a step; "*which did not seem to please the manager.* Indeed, *he appeared to be much mystified* at my *sang-froid.*" "The Brothers" had only the usual "success of esteem," which seemed to attend on such solemn performances. It is remarkable as one of the many "clergymen's plays," which were given to the stage in a perfect series. The two brothers were well played by Mossop and Garrick.§

* Davies gives the reason for this belief very *naïvely*, "*for* he expressed, during the time of action uncommon pleasure at the applause given to it." There is nothing more agonizing in the whole round of the drama than the last scene.

† Not December, 1752, as Murphy puts it.

‡ "She is far from an amiable character," says Murphy, gravely. "The last scene, in which she and *Demetrius*, her lover, *dispatch themselves*, does not produce *anything like* a pathetic catastrophe." When such a "situation" failed the poet, he must have been sadly at a loss for effects.

§ The "noble warmth of *Demetrius*," says Davies, "was congenial to the native fire and energy of Mr. Garrick, and Mossop happily seized the cruel and insidious disposition," &c. Murphy seems to interchange these

However, the charity to which the author gave all his profits, might incline the audience to accept with toleration a bald plot and monotonous versification. The benevolent doctor was, certainly, but ill repaid by a coarse epilogue of Mallet's, which came as a surprise upon the author, as he sat in Garrick's box to hear his own play. He heard himself alluded to thus strangely,—

——— "The man must be a widgeon:
Drury may *propagate:* but not religion,—"

and this, too, emphasized by Mrs. Clive in her broadest manner. Naturally indignant, he substituted another, which wound up with a true national flourish, and touched the right key in the bosom of the pit,*—

"Shout, Britons, shout! auspicious fortune bless!
And cry 'long live—our title to success!'"

The two leading characters were of level merit; and it was considered by partizans of Mossop that their favourite was quite equal if not superior to Garrick. The latter had a gorgeous dress, a green and mauve tunic, with armour, and plumes that rose from his helmet to an enormous height.† These were the ele-

characteristics, speaking of "the stern sententious roughness of Mossop, and the *smooth, graceful eloquence* of Garrick."

* A virtuous prince. Murphy's orthodox comment on this clap-trap is truly characteristic. "The play, in the present picture, ought to be revived, *were it only for the sake of introducing this epilogue,*" (which is reversing the order of things, and producing plays for the sake of epilogues, instead of epilogues for the sake of plays), "as there *certainly never was a time when Britons had so much reason to offer up the concluding prayer with the most fervent ejaculation*" (!)

† See one of Roberts' pretty little water-colour drawings in the British Museum, which seem as if they were done from photographs.

It is amusing to turn over the collection of plays, published during this era, and come on the engravings of Barry and Garrick, arrayed in, what was conceived to be, the correct costumes of remote countries, and more remote ages. These usurpers, and tyrants, and generals, stride and gesticulate in nodding plumes and fur tippets—huge as "Blue Beard's."

ments of the "regulation" costume for Persian, Grecian, Roman, Turkish, &c. That he should have brought out a play in which the characters should expose him to such a competition, is what few "leading" actors would be found to do, and is only a fresh proof of his moderation; though one adulator, strangely said, that in one sense, the manager "seemed to reign a very sultan in the throne of sorrow." Nothing is more mysterious than this Cambyses vein of dramatic writing. Others claimed the victory for Mossop, if that were victory where no competition was intended.*

Garrick could not have been disturbed at any rivalry, and would have been well content, as it was serving the interests of the theatre. But there was a set not very well disposed to him, who were eager to turn to profit anything likely to annoy. Of this party we shall now take a short view.

* As in some verses then going round :—

"'Who acted the Brothers? Which men? Let me know.'
'One man acted both.' 'Pr'y thee tell me how so.'
'Why *Demetrius* was Garrick, in powder like curd,
And *Perses* was Garrick in *Richard the Third.*'
'I heard 'twas one Mossop in Perses's shape'—
'No, 'twas Garrick himself, I am sure, or his ape.'
'Indeed you're mistaken'—'Then, I'm an old gossip,
And took Mossop for Garrick and Garrick for Mossop.'
'But I'll lay a wager—there is my pelf—
That if either was Mossop, 'twas Garrick himself;
For if it wasn't Garrick in Perses's shape,
O Garrick take care you aint bit by your ape;
He's cunning, and sly as behind you he steals,
The audience all saw he was close at your heels.'"

CHAPTER V.

THE BEDFORD.

1752.

THE extraordinary revival of interest in theatrical amusement at this season, had created a taste for systematic criticism; and the taste for criticism had established various little social tribunals, where those who could not obtain an opportunity in print, might freely discuss the merits of plays and players. There were a number of taverns about Covent Garden, where both actors and critics retired to drink and talk; but it was confessed that the Bedford, whose tone was like that of Button's in the Addison days, was the tribunal of most mark. Every night it was crowded with "men of parts," polite scholars and wits. From every "box" rose the sound of discussion, and the lively *bon mot*, and the student of character found here, as did Bonnell Thornton, an infinite variety in the crowd of scribblers, players, fiddlers, and gamblers, that made so large a part of its company. Conspicuous here was Macklin, disputing loudly, and coarsely, and when he was likely to be worsted, taking refuge in strong personality. Here, too, was Sir Francis Delaval, a true "blood," who delighted in "stirring up" his theatrical master, Macklin; and here, too, was seen that wild and witty and drunken Dr Barrowby, who, after a jovial life, had died the death that so often attends

on a jovial life. Foote's rough jests—and some of his best ones—found their birth here, and took flight from the Bedford all over the kingdom. There were other houses, in different quarters of the city, where a tone of criticism and debate was cultivated. But the Bedford took the lead, and from the Piazza at Covent Garden, its great kitchen fire might be seen blazing cheerfully, inviting the lounger from the theatre, with a seduction impossible to resist.* Here, too, was a little society of critics, calling themselves the Shakspeare Club, who affected to give laws on all things concerning the stage, and conspicuous among these law-givers was a Mr. Fitzpatrick, destined to have a considerable share in Garrick's history.†

He was an Irish gentleman of a cheerful character, who had been brought up in England under the well-known Dr. Peter Whalley. With a great deal of the combative impetuosity of his countrymen, he was well accomplished, able to unite the pursuits of a West-end man of fashion with the more profitable one of a city merchant, and could even find time to look after dramatic interests at the Bedford. He had travelled; wrote lively pieces; was nicknamed the "pale-faced orator;" and was looked to as the champion of the rights of the audience in any theatrical dispute. His friend Murphy insists particularly on his "elegant manners and accomplishments;" but the tremendous Churchill etching which,

* The Connoisseur, No. 11.

† The "Bedford Arms" is linked to our own day by the recollections of a Mr. Stacey, who had been connected with it for more than fifty years. He remembered a shilling Whist Club, to which Goldsmith, Churchill, Hogarth, Fielding, and many more, belonged. Stacey described the quarrel between Hogarth and Churchill: the latter "a stupid looking man." See "Smith's London."

as Mr. Forster has acutely said, is drawn with such art and mastery as to be above the narrow limitations of a particular individual or country, had not yet been painted. His effeminate face and macaroni airs were recognised everywhere. He could turn an essay pleasantly, and write an agreeable letter. He had travelled; he knew all the actors and actresses; he was the centre, too, of a circle of clever young men, who believed that

> "Our friend Fitzpatrick tells, you know,
> A tale extremely *àpropos*,"

—and who sometimes "put on a side-box face," but oftener went up with him soberly into the gallery. He was fondly regarded by his friends, chiefly Irish, who had come to town to push their fortune, or enjoy town, and who included James Murphy French, Arthur Murphy, Beau Tracey, George Colman, Whalley, and many more. Men of humbler degree, who found their way to the Bedford, were "Kit Smart"—a distressed poet, but elegant scholar; Dr. Hill; and a needy scribbler, who, it was said, had come over as Woffington's emissary, to sound the depths or shallows of the manager,—a scurrilous and dangerous fellow, who had been mixed up in the Dublin corporate squabbles, and who had been recently introduced to Garrick. This was Paul Hiffernan, Goldsmith's "Hiff," afterwards to have the distinction of frightening Foote, and whom the frequenters of the Bedford were warned against as a spy. To such a coterie—young, vivacious, and needy—Garrick and his theatre were naturally an object of interest. With such a prosperous undertaking, they were eager to be asso-

ciated. They, too, had already sounded the "depths and shallows" of the manager's soul, saw that he was undecided and a little timorous, and that here was their advantage.

The new actor, Mossop, had been received with welcome by his countrymen; their praises stimulated him, and it was their chorus of compliment, led by Mr. Thady Fitzpatrick, that first sowed the seeds of jealousy. Very soon the actor, though he was gaining ground steadily with the public in parts that suited him, such as *Zanga* and *Richard*, and others, which the judicious advice of Garrick led him to, began to have the usual suspicions and jealousies. This, indeed, seemed almost as of course. Garrick had some object in keeping him such parts, though some of them were Garrick's own "battle horses;" and he now began to demand "lover's" parts, like Barry's, at the other house. How unsuited would have been his rude unmusical voice, his stiff, uncouth gestures, ruled by "military plan," even a nineteenth century reader can understand. But Fitzpatrick was at his ear, and finding him in this temper, artfully worked upon and inflamed his grievances. Thus encouraged, Mossop sullenly persisted in his demands. Garrick, ever gentle and moderate, calmly reasoned with him. He even showed him the slender receipts of the theatre on nights when the tragedian was allowed his whim, and played in some part unsuited to him. Such moderation was quite thrown away. His grievances only became more inflamed, and, worked on by his friends, he was, after the usual quarrel, to leave the theatre abruptly. Later, almost as a matter of course, Garrick was to

forgive and forget this treatment, and receive him back on precisely his old footing.

Another member of this party was the notorious Dr. Hill, or Sir John Hill, as he called himself, from an order which he gave out the King of Sweden had sent to him, who was seen driving about in his chariot, and became later one of the most notorious "quack-doctors" of his time. He was certainly a remarkable character, uniting prodigious powers of "hack-work"—a love of science that made him steal plants from the gardens he visited—with the meanest nature, and a cowardice that seemed a disease. He stands apart in the curious line of characters of the past century. His "Vegetable Kingdom," in twenty-six great volumes, is an astounding monument of industry, and a respectable contribution to botanical knowledge. He wrote novels, natural history, supplements to dictionaries (true hack-work), essays on gems and on medicine. Later he became the Holloway of his day; and in many an old newspaper the eye will often meet with "Hill's Tincture of Valerian," "Essence of Waterdock," "Balsam of Honey," or "Elixir of Bardana," nostrums by which he made a fair subsistence. The extraordinary feature in his nature was his scurrilous courage—on paper,—and his no less abject pusillanimity when called to account for his outrages. He had a libellous periodical, called "The Inspector," which he wrote entirely himself, and which was said to have brought him in, in a single year, no less a sum than fifteen hundred pounds. In this organ he assumed the airs of a public critic, could air his own opinions and his own wrongs and animosities, with an amusing vanity. For an attack on a

Mr. Brown he was publicly chastised in Ranelagh Garden. He was exposed a hundred times, yet could not be put down. He tried to get into the Royal Society, and his qualifications were certainly equal to those of some of its members; and when he was rejected, held up two old patrons, who had opposed his admission, in the most outrageous manner. He would invite all the ambassadors to dinner; for his insufferable effrontry would seem at last to have made way for him. He was seen at all the coffee-houses; at masquerades and promenades, invariably in the front row at the theatres, exciting attention by his splendid dress and singular behaviour. When there was loud applause for the king, the doctor was seen to rise, and bow gravely to his Majesty. As with his position, so it was with his title, which no one disputed, and "Sir John" was he called always, to his death.* He had tried his hand at all things—had been one of Macklin's curious company collected at the Haymarket, and had played *Ludovico* with Foote. Everyone could contribute some incident to his degrading biography, and he was ready to do battle with all—in print—on the same terms. He was engaged in such a controversy with "Kit Smart," the chief of hack poets—the lowest on the Grub Street Parnassus—who had actually written a whole canto on the doctor—a "Hilliad"—in which occurred the extraordinary line—

"Th' insolvent tenant of incumbered space,"—

a description of the hero; and to which it was said

* Taylor, who was alive not many years back, brought Walcot to see Hill's widow, who was very agreeable. When "Peter Pindar" discovered who she was, he became furious, and said "he would go back and spit at her."

young Arthur Murphy, then no higher than a camp follower in this scribbler's war, had written notes.*

Such was an ally of Fitzpatrick and his coterie, and such was a fair specimen of the unscrupulous enemies who were round Garrick. The origin of his enmity to Garrick we do not know very clearly. Murphy says it was owing to reasons "best known to himself," which does not explain much; but he certainly vented his spleen in an elaborate paper, in which he very artfully, because temperately and critically, depreciated Garrick and exalted Barry. With all his hostility, he can scarcely be said, in this performance, to go beyond the limits of fair criticism. He even defended him in part, and noticed improvements. But perhaps what Garrick would have most resented, was the friendly defence of his short stature. Was there not one Johnson lately on the boards, a giant in height —sonorous and stalking majestic? He only dwarfed the rest. It was no merit in him to win stage battles. Yet in Barry's instance, his disproportion to Mrs. Cibber was quite overlooked; and on the same principle the audience now quite forgot Garrick's short stature, *and he had left off wearing cork soles in consequence.* Garrick showed that he was offended by this exaltation of a rival, for his little petty vanities were worn upon his sleeve, and he always foolishly showed that he was hurt. When, therefore, Hill fell into the mistake of supposing Mrs. Porter, the famous actress, to be dead, Garrick penned a very smart and lively epigram, which went round the town, gained him great applause, but a dangerous enemy.

* Taylor.

"O thou profound, polite, and wise, gay inspector!
Chosen by thy gracious self our tastes' director!
Who lay'st poor Porter, yet *alive*, in earth,
And giv'st to Barry matchless fame and worth;
Thy pen we all must reverence, and dread,
Which *kills the living*, and *revives* the *dead*."

Indeed, this was a specimen of the irresolution of Garrick. Surrounded as he was with "hacks" and Grub Street writers and highwayman scribblers, he had no system or method in dealing with them; but at one time soothed, at another defied them. The result was, a persecution that embittered much of his life.

Hill was foolish enough to draw on himself the attack of such an enemy as Fielding, who had at the beginning of the year started his new paper, the "Covent Garden Journal," in which he made Sir Alexander Drawcansir take the field against the whole "Grub Street army." With extraordinary personality, he described "a strange mixed monster," said to have the appearance of a lion, by some, but by others "to have ears much longer than those of that generous beast." This was an allusion to Hill. Hill, in his "Inspector" of the following Thursday, gave a malicious account of the acquaintance.

He was at the same time carrying on another unseemly quarrel with "Kit Smart," which controversy going on with Woodward's, produced the following amenities. Smart described the doctor as "an illiterate hireling," who had published "a collection of grave falsehoods couched in Billingsgate." This was succeeded by "An essay on the Rationality of Brutes, with a Comparison between Dr. Cadgill and Mango, the great monkey director of the animal performers at the Haymarket," in which the doctor is

roundly accused of slandering, "lying," defaming, cheating, embezzling, and in the coarsest terms. Newberry, the bookseller, was drawn in, and he had to appeal to the public on a question of credit.* Verses, of course, followed. The whole was, indeed, an indecent Grub Street wrangle, unworthy of notice by the public, who should have treated it with contempt. But it is worth a whole commentary on the wretched petty squabbles of the scribblers, "garreteers," and actors of the times, who were only too delighted to be allowed to wash their linen in public, and get spectators to stand by.†

Yet more were preparing for the coming fray. A young Irishman—an enthusiastic admirer of Roscius—had actually established a journal for the purpose of sounding the praises of his hero. He had come up to London, according to the usual routine with all needy Scotch and Irish; was in Alderman Ironside's counting-house in the City—seen often at the Bedford and George's at Temple Bar, and had thus become acquainted with Foote, and many of the leading wits and critics. At the Bedford he had met Hill, and it was a fresh bit of ill-luck for the unhappy "Inspector" that

* "The Gentleman's Magazine" had a rather shabby thrust at the doctor, consulting its old numbers, and saying, "we, too, *remember an apothecary* who was an humble candidate for a place in our magazine, and whose piece, after *necessary* corrections, was admitted.

† The features of this squabble seem almost incredible. Thus Hill brought out a weekly paper called "The Impertinent," which reached but to one number; and in his "Inspector" of the next week treated it as if it was not his own. "I have in vain sent to Mr. Bouquet for the second number. . . . The public deserves applause of the highest kind for crushing a piece that so cruelly attacks Mr. Smart." On this "The Gentleman's Magazine" steps in: "The man thus resents the cruel treatment of Mr. Smart in 'The Inspector,' and he who thus cruelly treated him in 'The Impertinent' is the same. . . The contempt with which his attempt was treated, induced him to join in the public censure, *just as a detected felon when he is pursued, cries out, 'Stop Thief,' and hopes to escape in the crowd that follows him.*"

his manner and style of writing should actually have stimulated the youth to try and put him down. In his fifth number he rushed at the doctor, describing him as a man who had taken on himself "to prescribe fashions to the ladies, and wire wigs to the gentlemen; intrigues to rich, and taste to pretty fellows," pestering the town with dissertations on fossils, minerals, and insects, "that never existed but in his own imaginations," that then "emboldened by a kind of negative *applause, that of being endured,*" he proceeded to greater lengths. Then came a parody:

> "Three great wise men in the same era born,
> Britannia's happy island did adorn;
> *Henley* in cure of souls displayed his skill,
> *Rock* shone in physic, in both *John Hill:*
> The course of nature could no further go,
> To make a third, he joined the former two."

This "ingenious young gentleman" conducted his "Gray's Inn Journal" with vivacity, and never lost the opportunity of praising his hero. Such persistent advocacy certainly laid Garrick under an obligation which he never tried to avoid. To Murphy it became eternal—the basis of exactions almost extravagant, and the extenuation of the most outrageous behaviour. Such was the Bedford *coterie.*

During the last two or three seasons, Rich had been seized with a more extravagant fit than usual of enmity, and gratified his spleen by several strange and unworthy acts. He had tried to injure Garrick by coarse ridicule. He had given a rude burlesque of Garrick's procession in "Henry the Fourth," and made one of his singers travesty a popular song in Garrick's Pantomime. This, however, was perhaps fairly incident to dramatic warfare. But less justi-

fiable was his hiring a professional mimic to take off Garrick's peculiarities. He had lately degraded the boards of Covent Garden by a dancer on "the slack-wire," and in a strange entertainment called "The Fair;" had imported a collection of wild animals — bears, monkeys, ostriches, "the Ornuto savage," with other such extravagances. In a new *Féerie*, therefore, when Woodward proposed ridiculing this barbarous show, but not Rich himself, Garrick made no objection. Hill, however, recollecting his old grudge, affected to be very indignant at this freedom; talked of "poor Rich," and went as far as to hint that the bloods and bucks of the Temple should attend in force to sack the theatre, fling the sconces on the stage, and tear up the benches. This was going too far, and there were plenty ready to take such a hint.

One night, as Woodward, the Harlequin, was being carried across the stage in a sedan chair, some disapprobation was shown among the audience, and an apple was thrown, which broke the glass of the chair. Woodward at once leaped out, picked up the apple, and seeing a gentleman very excited, in one of the side boxes, bowed to him, and said very significantly, "I thank you, sir!" This gentleman proved to be Mr. Fitzpatrick, the merchant and man of fashion. As a matter of course, it became a vulgar topic of excitement, and both parties rushed to take the public into confidence. Doctor Hill, in his "Inspector," gave Fitzpatrick's version, which was, that Woodward came up to the box, and said, insultingly, "I have noticed you and shall meet you again!" Woodward on this went to a magistrate, and took the unusual course of

making an affidavit as to the words he had used, "Sir, I thank you!" Fitzpatrick made a counter affidavit before another magistrate, and Woodward was corroborated by witnesses who had heard the whole transaction on the stage, and had even been present at the Bedford when Fitzpatrick came in and gave a version of the words, which was exactly Woodward's.*

"The Covent Garden Journal" gave a comic account of the whole proceeding, affecting to treat it as if it was an incident of real war, and using military terms; and, still making use of it to gibbet the luckless Hill, spoke of him as the "enemy's trumpeter" who was taken prisoner by Garrick's forces; for he was unable to make off, from having an empyema in his side, and *many dangerous bruises in his breech.* This jest the luckless "Inspector" had the folly to take *au grand sérieux*, and in his next paper indignantly explained that "the hurt he received from Mr. Brown was in his side, and not in his breech." Woodward then rushed into print in a pamphlet, with the motto, "I do remember an apothecary, in tattered weeds, culling of simples" —an allusion to the doctor's practice of stealing plants. The doctor had said that a comedian was "the meanest of all characters," and had thus exposed himself to a fatal retort, for Woodward discovered that the doctor had tried pantomime, comedy, and tragedy, and failed in all, and Woodward

* Boaden, in his odd language, says that "perjury, as a goad, was hanging between them;" but the whole might have readily been matter of misconception; as both speeches almost amounted to the same thing. Fitzpatrick, however, affected to believe that Woodward had challenged him.

added, that he might now be called "Harlequin Hill."* This was the first symptom of Fitzpatrick's hostility.

These were but small troubles. The theatre was prospering, even though the bishops had come to the Chamberlain with a memorial to stop all performances during Passion week. This was accorded at the beginning of the year 1753, and from that time panoramas, and lectures on astronomy, were privileged to take the place of plays and comedies.

Gradually Drury Lane was gaining its old strength. With the new season that began in September '53, returned, repentant, the revolted Cibber, to be received by the manager with his unfailing good humour —a good substitute for the pretty and petulant, but untrained Bellamy, who had passed over to the other house. Now was Macklin taking his "farewell benefit" on the stage of his enemy, and speaking a prologue written for him by that enemy—perhaps to the surprise of the public—but not to the surprise of those who knew Garrick's superiority to petty resentment. Macklin's daughter was also engaged—a kindly provision now that her father was quitting the stage, or pretending to do so.†

Garrick's usual good fortune brought to his house, and not to Covent Garden, the Mrs. Graham who afterwards became Mrs. Yates. Even then her great beauty, fine presence, and immature talent, made a deep im-

* He had played *Lothario* with "Dagger" Marr, a poor actor, and when *Lothario* said, "*O Altamont*, thy genius is the stronger!" the audience applauded ironically. This allusion nearly drew Woodward into a second quarrel with "Dagger" Marr, who naturally did not relish it. There was near being a scandal in the green-room; but "Mr. Woodward, with his usual politeness, *made a very genteel apology.*"

† He gave out that he was going to open a tavern. Foote said, "He will first break in trade, and then break his word."

pression; and later, wisely listening to careful instruction, and furnished with opportunities by the illness of rivals, she took her place as one of the grand actresses of the century. She, with Mrs. Cibber, Pritchard, Garrick, and Mossop, made a strong cast for any play, and they first appeared together in Glover's "Boadicea."* The piece, however, had the fate of its predecessors—"dragged" on for a few nights, and was then consigned to the shelf. How, after such lessons, the production of a series of plays could be persisted in, considering the cost, trouble, and time necessary, seems incomprehensible. But his next venture helps us a little to the secret. Garrick lived as much in the world, as on his stage. He knew wits, politicians, persons of quality, lords and ladies in plenty. This was in truth one of his failings. All the clergymen authors, hack-historians and poets who wrote heavy tragedies, had patrons in this class—patrons to whom they dedicated—patrons whose virtues they sang, under the titles of Mæcenas and Augustus, and whom they told in prefaces (a panegyric usually recompensed with twenty or fifty guineas) that they had saved the decaying commonwealth from destruction. The clergyman-dramatist who had laboured out his leaden five acts on the story of Hippolytus, or Æneas, or Eurydice, seeing Mr.

* The "amiable" author insisted on reading his play in the green-room. But his voice was harsh and his elocution bad; and when Mr. Garrick offered to relieve him for an act or two, he rather touchily declined.

Murphy's criticisms and descriptions of plot, are quite of their kind. *Dumnorix* "presents a bowl of poison" to his wife. "She obeys (?) and dies soon after." *Dumnorix* weeps over her, and falls on his own sword. "*It is unnecessary to add that this catastrophe made no impression*, and the piece ended in a cold, languid, and unimpassioned manner." He found the same fault with "The Brothers," though that play finished off with no less than two deaths.

Garrick dining with "my lord," might readily ask "my lord" to say a word for him to the great manager. From the pressure of private friendship, the importunity of strangers, or the interest of the great, he was driven to produce things which his judgment scarcely approved.

Thus, after the failure of "Creusa"—Mr. Whitehead's adaptation from a Greek poet*—he was driven, by this weighty pressure, to bring out another play of the same class. There was a certain Reverend Mr. Crisp—the "Daddy Crisp" of Miss Burney—who was an artist, a *fanatico* in music, a scholar, and general *dilettante*—and who, according to the inevitable course, fancied he was also qualified for the drama. In course of time he produced a laborious five-act play on the subject of *Virginia*. He had fashionable friends, among others Lord Coventry—the "Cov." of the clubs—one of the wild "set" at Almacks. This competent judge pronounced it good, and, what was of more importance, got the great Mr. Pitt to read and approve it; for in these times just as classical scholars and clergymen seemed to be *ex-officio* qualified to write plays, so the judgment of a minister became of equal importance as a criticism. Garrick knew the value of such approval. He received the piece with the courtesy due to such a recommendation, but on one pretext or

* "Creusa," says Davies, in his odd language, "is *vitiated* by Apollo." "The skill of the poet (Whitehead) contrived to draw from it a *pleasing picture of a young prince's education, and to give excellent lessons in politics and morals.*" Audiences were indeed to be pitied who had to sit and listen. Mr. Garrick, we are told, "displayed a skill in delivering didactics, which showed him to be a perfect master of elocution." It, however, gave great satisfaction to Mr. Walpole, who said it was the only new tragedy that he ever saw and *really liked.* "The plot is *most interesting*, and though so complicated is *quite clear and natural.*" Some other plays of the same sort delighted him in the same way.

another, put it aside for years. In despair the author thought of a happy resource. The lovely Gunning, now Countess of Coventry, about whom all London was mad, drove to Southampton Street and sent in for Mr. Garrick. He came out to the door, and was handed by the famous beauty a bulky MS. tragedy. "There," she said, "I put into your hands a play which the best judges tell me will do honour to you and the author." The lady whose very shoe, on being exhibited, brought money, and who had a guard of honour as she walked in the Park, could ask nothing in vain from a manager. Mr. Crisp's "Virginia" was accepted and brought out. Brought out, too, with all speed; but nothing could galvanise it: not even Garrick's grand "point," when *Virginia* was claimed, and he stood in a dull amazement for many moments, showing a speechless struggle, going on his face, then burst into a slow sobbing exclamation—"THOU TRAITOR!"* Later, as an alterative, came a revival—a protracted bit of French declamation—"Zara," modelled on Voltaire's "Zaire," which dragged through five long acts. Garrick

* Murphy gives this in his "Life;" and Boaden one night, at Old Slaughters, heard him give a description of it nearly the same; but the result of it, as described so oddly, is Boaden's own. "The audience was for once electrified *without noise*, and the applause became abundant *and universal.*" Nor could the new and charming actress help to give it life—Mrs. Graham, afterwards the well-known Mrs. Yates. In a few nights it went to the Limbo of blank verse plays—a fate which the author laid to the account of "careless performers," Garrick's hostility, and public prejudice. When the play was finally laid on the shelf, he struggled for years to obtain a second hearing. His noble friend, Coventry, with a man of fashion's wisdom, looked it over again, and advised him to make some change. The author took back his play eagerly, and for months worked on it. But Garrick was firm. By that time the lovely Irish Countess had sickened from the "white paint" she spread upon her cheeks; consumption was setting in, and she could no longer drive to the manager's house and require him to receive plays of her *protégé*. Mr. Crisp's "Virginia" did not get a second trial, and very soon the clerical author found himself with all his fortune gone, and in a very bad way indeed.

was "a most venerable and pathetic old man," says Murphy. We can see him, as he then appeared, with long white woolly hair, and a flowered dressing-gown, standing with Mrs. Yates, whose dress is absolutely gorgeous. Never did actress appear so magnificently clad, glittering with a profusion of laces, tags, a cloud of furbelows, and a monster head-dress that seemed a perfect pyramid of jewels, hair, and decorations.*

The season of 1754 began with fresh spirit and rivalry. Sheridan had come over from Dublin, and Barry had left Rich, complacently prophesying that ruin would attend on his desertion.† Sheridan came with new plays and new characters, and with his style in certain characters vastly improved. He did, indeed, fall into the common mistake of choosing unsuitable parts, and "rattled the ear where he should have touched the heart." But in *Coriolanus* he was fine; and it must have been amusing to have gone from one theatre to the other, and heard the two stormy actors lustily thundering. He had learned, in *Richard*, not to die in sprawling agonies and gymnastic convulsions —a common weakness with the leading players. Woffington, too, had come back to town,—after being fooled and flattered in the Dublin green-room, in the most extravagant way. There she heard that Cibber wanted

* See the fine print in the British Museum. "Half the battle," in one of these new declamatory plays was the actresses' dress; and in all the agreements which were made with actresses, this question of allowance for so many dresses was always fiercely pressed and debated. This, indeed, was one of the redeeming points in the "Tragedy Queen" parts—they gave a fine opening for magnificence.

† One of his enemies in Dublin thus described him:—"His *Romeo* is horrible among the most horrible; and as he wants ease and life, he has judiciously determined to play *Celadon* in 'The Comical Lover.' It would require the pen of a Scarron to describe his appearance."—*Digges.*

her powers, Pritchard her address and spirit, Clive her humour, Macklin her judgment, Bellamy her tenderness, and all human nature her accomplishments.* One of her freaks was playing *Lothario*. The warm passion of that character was delivered with a "finical delicacy." Her audiences, too, were falling off. She changed the scene, and was received with welcome and admiration in London. Such was the advantage then for players, in these two great theatrical communities. One of the Bedford coterie had become bitten with the stage; and Mr. Murphy, giving up journalism, made his *début* as *Othello*.

Garrick led off the season with a capital revival. A friendly whisper came from the Court, that the king had been talking over the pleasure he once had in seeing Wilks and Mrs. Oldfield play in an old comedy of Beaumont and Fletcher's, and Garrick, whose eyes always turned fondly to Court, and whose loyalty verged on obsequiousness, had it put in rehearsal at once. This was "The Chances," which Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham,† had altered and adapted, and which Garrick himself now carefully retouched and pruned down. The Drury Lane pit had a prospect of seeing something with true life and motion and character; and to men like Ralph, who objected that new plays were not brought out, might have been retorted that gay comedies, so old, and of such a pattern, were newer and more welcome than the poor stuff of the Crisps and Franklins he was bringing forward. Garrick was delightful in *Don John*. Mrs. Cibber, however, was scarcely at home in the gay *Constantia*, and

* Digges, in Jesse Foote's "Life of Murphy."

† Not *Villiers*, Duke of Buckingham, as Murphy has it.

her solemn and infinitely sweet accents could not lend themselves to the vivacity of a gay coquette. How unsuited she was may be conceived, when we know that later it was taken up, and "made," by the lively Abington.

But here was another clergyman, Dr. Brown, in the green-room, with a tragedy of the same wearisome old pattern, full of *Zelims*, *Ottomans*, *Achmets*, and *Barbarossas*, of bombastic Easterns, and turgid declamation. Garrick, however, put movement into this play, by suggesting to the author various rather hackneyed stage devices.* Mossop had here a splendid opening for tearing of a part to tatters in the barbarian *Barbarossa*, and with stentorian lungs roared tyranny, and defiance, and cruelty, according to the popular ideal of eastern despots. It was indeed the *reductio ad absur-*

* *Barbarossa* is the most "swearing" of stage heroes. His language was at times awful. His favourite oath is, "By hell!" "Curse the traitors!" "Perdition on thy falsehood!" "Accurst art thou," "Curse their womanish hearts," are some of his mildest expressions.

After scenes of ranting, a discovery which has often since furnished food for laughter and burlesque, is thus made :—

"*Othman.*— Besides, he wears
A mark indelible, a *beauteous* scar,
Made on his forehead by a furious pard,
Which, rushing on his mother, Selim slew.
Achmet.—A scar!
Othman.—Ay, on his forehead.
Achmet (*lifting his turban*).—What, like this?
Othman (*kneels*).—Whom do I see?
Am I awake! my prince!
My honour'd, honour'd king!"

We may compare with this, the modern :—

"*Cox.*—Tell me, ah! in mercy tell me, have you such a thing as a strawberry mark on your left arm?

"*Box.*—No!

"*Cox.*—Then it is he! my long lost brother."

The same extraordinary token of recognition was introduced in "Zara," where a "cross" on a daughter's arm is the means of restoring her to her parents.

dum of the style; but it had success from its very extravagance.*

A bell was heard to toll, about which there was a little history. Garrick had purchased it specially at an enormous expense, to toll during *his* "Romeo" procession, in opposition to Rich's. It however failed in this respect, and then did most effective duty in tolling for the execution of *Pierre*, in "Venice Preserved." It seems more than probable that like another famous manager of fiction, who was anxious to have his "pumps and washing-tubs" turned to profit, that he wrote to Dr. Brown to bring in his bell. The doctor managed it in this way:—

> "*Bar.*— For the bell
> Ev'n now expects the sentinel to toll
> The signal of thy death.
> *Selim.*—Let guilt like thine tremble at death.
> *Bar.*—Then take thy wish;
> (*Bell tolls.*)
> There goes the fatal knell."

But the doctor forgot, what Johnson soon found out, that the use of bells was unknown to the Mahometans, and that Doctor Young had used the same device effectively in his play. "We are not to be made April fools of twice," said Johnson, roughly. And soon it became a favourite jest at his expense; and Murphy, in one of his insane fits of exasperation, would write to him tauntingly, "*You*, who rang a bell among the Turks!"

* Murphy's criticism is again most singular. After saying that Mrs. Cibber, with "her expressive and harmonious voice, spoke daggers in every sentence," he adds, that "*it was the thunder and lightning of virtue*," her behaviour extorting from the barbarian "the fine reflection:"

> "—— There is a charm
> Of majesty in virtue, that disarms
> Reluctant pow'r and bends the struggling will
> From her most firm resolve."

A 'fine,' but still very ordinary and trite reflection.

The February of '55 was to find him freely "tampering" with Shakspeare, as Cibber and others before him had done. An operetta called "The Fairies," was brought forward, the music by a Mr. Smith, a pupil of Handel's, and the "book" of which was adapted from the "Midsummer Night's Dream." For this rude laying of hands on a sacred object he was roughly brought to account. His cutting up this play, and "The Tempest" into operas, was certainly a foolish and injudicious step. And though his was not the profane hand that did the work—as is commonly said—it was done by his direction, and on his encouragement.*

It should be recollected that every one had tried his hand at restoring, and patching, and alteration, so that it was excusable in Garrick to follow the public taste. It must be recollected, too, that his idea was not to give the "Midsummer Night's Dream," but an opera founded on the story, using the poet's dialogue where it was possible. The whole was indeed meant to bring out two Italian singers, Signor Curioni and Signora Passerini, who had some twenty-seven songs: for he hankered after these exotics, and always had his agents in foreign countries, looking out for artistes. But his real justification, as it might have seemed to him, was the high authority of Warburton. It would be hard for any one not to be encouraged by such an extravagant compliment as the following: "Besides your giving an elegant form to a monstrous composi-

* Nothing can be more explicit than his denial of authorship:—"If you mean," he wrote to a person who, while offering a play, taunted him with turning Shakspeare into an opera, "if you mean that I was the person who altered the 'Midsummer Night's Dream' and 'The Tempest' into operas, you are much mistaken."

tion, you have, in your own additions, written up to the best scenes in this play, so that you will easily imagine I read the reformed 'Winter's Tale' with great pleasure. You have greatly improved a fine prologue." After this, it is hard to say a word against Garrick.

A detailed setting out of the annals of a theatre becomes about as monotonous as reading a *catalogue raisonné;* a theatrical history will take the shape of an abstract of so many playbills. This seems almost unavoidable; for looking over the long line of theatrical biographies, we find that each unavoidably falls into a series of play succeeding play, theatre succeeding theatre, and engagement following engagement. The story of a manager's life is specially open to this objection. But we shall only delay very little longer and anticipate some of these Shakspearean revivals.

For the next season of 1755-6 he prepared "The Winter's Tale," altered with freedom.* Yet the alteration was not unskilfully done. There was a charming song by Mrs. Cibber, in the true pastoral key:—

"Come, come, my good shepherds, our flocks we must shear:
In your holiday suits with your lasses appear!
The happiest folk are acquitted and free,
And who are so guileless and happy as we?" †

Garrick had the temerity, in his prologue, to boast, that it was his—

"Joy—my only plan—
To lose no drop of that immortal man."

But it was said, happily enough, that he had certainly lost a whole pailful of him here.

† A line was repeated with praise to Johnson, as from this song:—

"I'd smile with the simple, and feed with the poor."

He was very happy in his ridicule of it:—"Nay, my dear lady, this will never do. Poor David! 'Smile with the simple!' What folly is that. And who would feed with the poor that can help it? No, no; let me smile with the

Garrick himself played *Leontes*, and with masterly effect, in the statue scene. It was said, too, that had he retained the original version of the play, he would have doubled the attraction of his own part; which shows the admirable self-denial which regulated all his theatrical plans, and the due subordination of himself to the general effect of the stage. To him, also, we owe the capital Shakspearean farce of "Katharine and Petruchio," which now keeps the stage, and always will keep it, in that shape. The animosity well known to exist between Woodward and Mrs. Clive, gave a life and interest to the piece; it was said, the actor threw her down with a violence more than was warranted by the situation. The fierce, and real, resentment of the actress at this treatment—her rage, which she could hardly control, all fell in excellently with the tone of the piece, and delighted the audience. Then followed "The Tempest," fashioned into an opera, with Mr. Beard, the popular ballad singer, as *Prospero*. This, as I have mentioned, was no more than fashioning an opera on the subject of the play, just as Halévy used to do in the present century. Still, it was thought sacrilege enough for a single season; and there were plenty, who cared very little for Shakspeare, ready to raise the cry. Theo. Cibber, whose father had been the grand offender, delivered a lecture at the Hay, in which he affected deep indignation.*

wise, and feed with the rich." This "sally," was reported to Garrick by the good-natured Boswell, who "wondered to find his sensibility as a writer not a little irritated by it." The actor might well have been, for what he had written was, that "content and sweet cheerfulness" were what smiled with the simple, and not "*I'd* smile." But this is only a slight specimen of the misrepresentation that attended the actor all through his life.

* "'The Midsummer Night's Dream' has been minced and fricasseed into a thing called 'The Fairies,' 'The Winter's Tale' mammocked into a droll, and

When Garrick played *Hamlet* again, an idea occurred to him of getting Woodward to give a serious tone to the character of *Polonius*, instead of the usual buffooning air with which low comedians always invested it. The experiment failed; the audience could not understand. After this, who could blame Garrick, for sometimes leaving the true legitimate path in his choice of entertainments, or for taking freedoms with Shakspeare. Mossop's wrongs, and the sense that he was "kept down" by jealousy, had made him leave the theatre in disgust. There remained friends and "bottle-holders" who had made use of him merely to annoy the manager, and who inflamed his jealousy solely to that end. Yet Mossop seems to have had no reasonable cause of complaint, as he had acted over thirty nights, and always in fine and important characters, such as *Barbarossa*, *Macbeth*, *Richard*, and *Coriolanus*. Garrick begged of him to stay, but he was not to be soothed, and went away to Ireland. He left behind him an angry and discontented "party"; and very early the manager was to receive a rude check, and discover the fatal truth that a theatrical audience is the most fickle thing in the world, and will turn upon its most cherished favourite, at the first moment of ill-humour. With this coming trouble, it is not unreasonable to suppose that his personal enemies were associated.

Then followed "All's Well that Ends Well," and "Rule a Wife and Have a Wife," in which Mrs. Cibber

'The Tempest' castrated into an opera . . . . . Yet this sly Prince would insinuate that all this ill-usage of the Bard is owing, forsooth, to his love of him."

perversely claimed the lively *Estifania*, but had to resign it, after a single night, to the better genius of Mrs. Pritchard. It properly belonged to Clive, but rumour said, that "she was kept out of her part" by the jealousy of Woodward and Garrick. As to the latter, we have seen enough of him by this time to know that he could sacrifice everything to the interest of a play: and the change is sufficiently explained by the ill-judged claim of Cibber, whose whims had to be consulted. That actress, now growing subject to sudden fits of illness, and with some of her charms failing, capriciously used the power given her by her articles, to select gay and youthful parts. Then he revived his little farce of "Lethe," with a new character for himself—*Lord Chalkstone*—and allowed Murphy, who was engaged at the theatre, and already plaguing him, to bring out a new farce for his own benefit. This combative actor, and player, and lawyer, and dramatist, and poet—for he was all five—was now in the midst of a quarrel with Foote, on the score of this very farce. Foote had produced a very lively piece, called "The Englishman in Paris," the humour of which turns on the doings of a *Sir Charles Buck* in that capital. Murphy conceived the notion of writing a sequel—on the return of the Englishman—which he mentioned to Foote, who, conceiving that this was a sort of piracy of his property, set to work, and anticipated the other, in just such a sequel. Murphy was furious, brought out *his* piece, in which he glanced at Foote, as "an impostor who has stolen my writings."*

* Not content with this, he published a satirical farce called "The Spouter," in which Foote was brought in with Cibber as *Dapperwit* and

Having to face these elements, and with this crowd of enemies slowly drawing together, and always on the watch, it was not long before a serious rebuff came. Fitzpatrick, and the partisans of Mossop, were now to find the opportunity they sought.

None of these attempts to please the public could be called very successful. But it was known at the Bedford that he had long been preparing a *spectacle* that should be above all competition. It was hardly wonderful that he should be so attached to pageants and processions, as these were the attractions, which, after his own acting, brought most money to the theatre. He clung to them, through many shocks; and, after the rough treatment he was now to receive on presenting "The Chinese Festival," we may admire his constancy and perseverance.*

Pistol. *Pistol* is saying, "*Dapperwit* is eaten up with vanity; no economy, no virtue, not a grain of integrity." *Dapperwit* enters suddenly, and *Pistol* says, "My dear *Dapperwit*, I am heartily glad to see you. You're the only theatrical man *that has any virtue and integrity.*" It was curious that Garrick, later, could have told of just such a scene as this, only Foote was the speaker.

* There are many caricatures ridiculing this weakness: one represents Garrick, with the "book" of one of his shows in his hand, with Messink, the mechanist, beside him, shouting "Processions for ever!" and a crowd of men with hammers, &c. Underneath are the lines:—

"Behold the Muses, Roscius, sue in vain,
Tailors and carpenters usurp their reign!"

In another, Garrick is shown walking over the works of Shakspeare, Rowe, and others.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CHINESE FESTIVAL.—WOFFINGTON'S RETIREMENT.

1755–1757.

For Garrick the charms of French life and the attractions of the French stage had always a sort of fascination. The exquisite and elegant touch of that nation in all theatrical matters was well appreciated by him, and his eyes were always turning towards Paris for French books, French players, French devices in scenery and decoration, and French artists. His own recent visit, where he had made many friends, had strengthened this spell. And already, in the autumn of 1754—perhaps finding his audiences dulled by their late heavy doses of weary legitimate comedy—he had begun to think of a grand *coup*, which should impart variety and rouse their apathy. A favourite stock-charge against the manager had been, that he conducted his theatre too penuriously in the matter of decorations and dresses, and relied on the cheap, unadorned attractions of his own declamation. This economy, it was said, typified both his vanity and his "near" disposition. Such speeches were not slow in reaching his ears, and he was now to give them a triumphant refutation.

There was in Paris a certain Jean George Noverre, a Swiss dancer, of some celebrity, but better known at the little theatres of the small courts of Europe

than he was at Paris. He enjoyed a high reputation, as a *maître de ballet*, and in the more feminine *rôle* of "male dancer;" and Garrick had heard from his French friends of his abilities. He accordingly opened negotiations with him, through a M. Silvain. His first offers were declined—Noverre demanding the modest sum of 350 guineas, with a free benefit, subject to no deductions. His letters are indeed happy specimens of the professional rapaciousness often common to both singers and dancers. He could not "come for a penny less"; his "appointments" at the French theatres were worth 250 louis. He had, besides, his pupils, and an offer from the Court of Bavaria. Entirely in the interests of Mr. Garrick, he also mentioned his sister, Mdlle. Noverre, "*une jolie danseuse*," and the manager should have her services cheap, at 100 guineas. The negotiations were at last concluded. He obtained his terms, with the exception of the "no deductions" from the benefit night, which he consented to give up, as it was not the custom in England. The "jolie danseuse" was also engaged on his own terms. The agreement being signed, the dancer now began to see what fresh advantages he might obtain from the easy nature of Garrick.

Would he not require ballet dresses or models for them, which he could get in Paris. Perhaps Mr. Garrick might now want a really good pantomimist, remarkable for "his lightness and vigour." He, of course, was to supply everything for "The Chinese Festival," his grand ballet, and for "The Fountain of Youth," at Mr. Garrick's charges. He was presently making a hasty visit to London to look at the stage

&c., and Garrick sent him twenty pounds for expenses, which certainly seemed enough, considering that he was to leave on a Sunday and arrive on Thursday; but he, rather imperiously, required more.

By May, he was busy ordering dresses, and had paid fifteen guineas to an eminent *costumier*. He had some sketches for four "set scenes." The price demanded was certainly too high. Still they were magnificent. M. Boquet, *chêf* to the *Fêtes de la Cour* was the artist. This gentleman was willing to go over to London, superintend the "mounting" of the ballet, the dresses, decorations, &c., decorate the boxes, rearrange the theatre, light it in the French style without lustres, and stay six weeks at his own charges, for 150 *guineas*. This was a modest proposal, considering that some of these duties were what Noverre himself undertook. He was also engaging dancers; but declared it was out of the question to get them for so low a sum as forty guineas apiece. "You know," said he, with a true Frenchman's turn, "that woman is a very dear article, though common enough." He required a child to dance *L'Amour*. "Then," adds this artful foreigner, with marvellous effrontery, "I cannot live at London *without my wife; do* see if she can be useful to you for your pantomime. She will dance in my ballet; what salary will you give her?" But better still, is the implied claim for compensation in the following: "I have had much trouble since my return. I lost two rings worth sixty louis, which my wife fixed on badly to my chain, *and I lost them when paying a visit to M. Silvain,*" that is, to Garrick's agent!

There were others who understood his character

better than Garrick. The manager, always thoughtful and good-natured, had recommended him to a clever young lawyer, Patu, who was so enthusiastic about learning English, and wrote it so admirably. The dancer artfully turned this advantage to his own profit, and made the advocate write to the manager to enforce his own demands. "I am convinced," wrote the advocate, "if his wife goes to London with him, you will be charmed." It was really impossible, he said, to get dancers for forty guineas. Later, the advocate seems to have formed a less agreeable impression, and wrote to caution Garrick against both husband and wife. The dancer had more or less failed in Paris; had hardly any pupils. The "charming Madame Noverre" had made several trials for the stage, but had been rejected.

At last, all was arranged, and Garrick having conceded everything, was told, in a tumult of grateful rapture, "that his style was delicious; that he was a divine creature;" and the male Dancer, with his "decorations" and his figurantes, started for England.* It will be guessed what a costly venture this was, and what a serious outlay had been incurred; the result was to be a truly splendid *spectacle*, which could not fail to be successful and profitable.

But there were dangers approaching, which a skilful manager—knowing the childish unreasonableness of the general public, whose servant he must be—might have foreseen. From the beginning of the year, the

* Murphy says, he arrived in London "with a band of no less than a hundred chosen for this purpose." An inaccuracy of not much importance, but the "band" he did bring, did not exceed fourteen or sixteen, as will be seen from the bill.

relations between England and France had been very critical, and the feelings of both countries had been inflamed by attacks and reprisals, committed in distant colonies, the origin of which was vehemently and angrily disputed. When, therefore, in the month of November, 1755, Mr. Noverre and his grand *spectacle*, "The Chinese Festival," was ready, the countries were actually on the eve of a war. The low prejudices of the mob were aroused against everything French, and the enemies of the manager of Drury Lane were not slow to raise the cry that there was a gang of "frog-eating" Frenchmen and French women brought over to take the bread out of the mouths of honest Englishmen.

Some days before the piece was brought out, the managers became conscious of the danger, but it was then too late. All the expense had been incurred. A temperate appeal—evidently inspired by Garrick—appeared in the papers. It stated that the contract had been signed more than a year ago; and before the disturbed relations between the countries could have been thought of. As to their being French dancers, there were no more than were usually at any of the theatres. Mr. Noverre and his sisters were Swiss, and what was more, OF A PROTESTANT FAMILY. (It is humiliating to think that the history of intolerance must be pursued, even behind the scenes.) His wife and her sister were Germans. Of the whole corps—amounting to sixty—forty were English. This was a fair and convincing appeal; but argument with a mob is hopeless.

The night arrived—the 8th of November—suspiciously near to the great Guy Fawkes anniversary.

With all these exertions, the decorations were not quite ready. Noverre, who had written a scientific work on Dancing, had exhausted himself in splendid devices—exhibiting all the popular, and perhaps inaccurate, notions of Chinese dress, music, dancing, and habits. Not content with his appeal, Garrick had, as he fancied, by a master-stroke, secured the attendance of the old King, respect for whom, he thought, would restrain the audience.*

* The bill of the night has been preserved. Garrick's fine eyes, as he turned over his old playbills, must have always rested on that one with discomfort.

By His Majesty's Command.

THEATRE ROYAL, in Drury Lane.

This present Saturday, being the 8th of November, 1755, will be presented a Comedy, called

The Fair Quaker of Deal.

Beau Mizen, by Mr. WOODWARD.
Commodore Flip, by Mr. YATES.
Arabella Zeal, by MISS MACKLIN.
Belinda, by Miss HAUGHTON.
The Fair Quaker, by Mrs. DAVIES.

To which will be added, a New Grand Entertainment of DANCING, called

THE CHINESE FESTIVAL.

Composed by Mr. NOVERRE.

The Characters by

Mons. DELAISTRE, Sig. BALETTI, Mr. LAUCHERY,

Mr. Noverre, jun.	Mons. L. Clert,
Mr. Dinnison,	Mr. Harrison,
Mons. St. Leger,	Mr. Granier,
Mr. Shawforth,	Mr. Hurst,
Mr. Mathews,	M. Sarney,
Mons. Pochee,	Mr. Walker,

Mrs. VERNON, Miss NOVERRE,

Mr. Morris,	Mrs. Noverre,
Mr. Booker,	Mrs. Gibbons,
Mr. Sturt,	Mad. Charon,
Mr. Atkins,	Mad. Nousselet,
Mr. Ackman,	Mrs. Preston,
Mr. Walker,	Mad. Nonend,
Sig. Pietro,	Mrs. Phillips,
Mrs. Addison,	Mrs. Lawson,

The opening piece passed off without interruption; but as soon as the curtain rose upon the "Chinese Festival," a storm of fury broke out; all was noise, storm, and confusion in a moment. It would be neither seen nor listened to. Mr. Lacy asked what the cause of the uproar was, and went away, laughing heartily. The Babel was almost terrific; the curtain had to be let down. The question then was, what was to be done? Lacy, always prudent and discreet, was for yielding and withdrawing the piece; but Garrick, with more courage, or, as his detractors would have said, with a careful eye to all the money he had laid out, was determined on going on. An interval of some days was allowed to elapse, and Garrick thought that by playing one of his best parts he might disarm

Little PIETRO, Miss NOVERRE,

Master Simpson,	Miss Bride,
Master Pope,	Miss Popling,
Master Blagden,	Miss Simson,
Master Hurst,	Miss Heath,
Master Spilsbury,	
Mr. Scrase,	Mr. Clough,
Mr. Ackman,	Mr. Allen,
Mr. Jefferson,	Mr. Gray,
Mr. Burton,	Mrs. Bradshaw,
Mr. Mare,	Mrs. Hippisley,
Mr. Vaughan,	Mrs. Matthews,
Mr. Chambers,	Mrs. Simpson, and
Mr. Bulbrick,	Miss Mills.

With New Music, Scenes, Machines, Habits, and other Decorations.

Boxes, 5*s.*—Pit, 3*s.*—First Gal. 2*s.*—Upper Gal. 1*s.*

Places for the Boxes to be taken of Mr. VARNEY, at the Stage-door of the Theatre.

No person can possibly be admitted behind the Scenes, or into the Orchestra.

Nothing under full price will be taken during the whole performance.

It will be seen that the artful foreigner contrived to import a "Mr. Noverre, jun." and *two* Miss Noverres, besides Mrs. Noverre and her sister. The *maître de ballet* and his family were purposely set down with English styles and titles, to avert the popular prejudices.

the mob. But each night things only grew worse. It was noticed that there was an aristocratic, or French party, in the boxes—noblemen, who got all their gorgeous *bleu de Roi* suits over from the Paris tailors, and who were vehement in applauding the French dancers. On the Friday following the King was got to come again; through the agency of the Duke of Grafton, and Garrick, who had never yet played before him, was to give one of his best parts.*

The tumult went on for several nights more. At last, on the sixth, the lords and gentlemen leaped on to the stage with drawn swords—ladies caught up the enthusiasm, and pointed out delinquents. This only infuriated the mob, who now began to think of venting their fury on the theatre. The benches were torn up, the decorations dragged down, the lustres demolished, and finally, M. Boquet's costly "machines" were all destroyed. It was proposed to fire the house, but this was happily prevented. From the stage the management had to announce that they yielded, and would play the piece no more; in return for which

* Murphy makes an extraordinary jumble here, mixing up what occurred much later during the Sheridan engagement. Garrick, he says, was in his green-room, and, with pardonable vanity, was dying to know what impression he had produced. Mr. Fitzherbert, a well-known man about town, and said by an admirer "to possess wit, humour, and politeness almost beyond any gentleman of the day," came in fresh from the Royal box. The actor asked him what the King thought of *Richard*. "I can't say," said the other, "but when the *Mayor of London* was announced, his Majesty roused himself to listen." He added, that when the facetious *Taswell* came in, buffooning as the *Mayor*, the King said, "Duke, I like that Lord Mayor;" and when the scene was over, he repeated, "Duke, that is a good Lord Mayor!" "But did not the *spectacle*, the drums, and the soldiers, produce some effect?" "I don't know as for that," said the gentleman who was "possessed of wit, humour, and politeness beyond any one of his day," "but when *Richard* was roaring for a horse, his Majesty said, 'Duke, will that Lord Mayor not come again?'" Murphy was actually behind the scenes, and should have remembered that "Richard" was not played at all.

concession, the mob repaired at once to Southampton Street, where they demolished all Garrick's windows, and did other damage. Indeed, he was apprehensive that his life was in danger, and obtained a guard of soldiery from his friends in power. Thus he learned how frail was the tenure of a player's popularity.

It is said that the whole of this riot was deliberately organized, and that it was artfully circulated that French carpenters and French dressmakers were being employed, to the prejudice of the British workman. This was indignantly denied by the manager's defenders; but, as we have seen, there were some grounds for the imputation. It is more than likely that these stories were sent about by Fitzpatrick and others of Garrick's enemies, if, indeed, they did not themselves take part in the attacks. Foote's capital stroke, in one of his farces, was founded in truth, when he described "the patriot gingerbread baker in the Borough, who would not endure three dancers from Switzerland because he hated the French." The loss reached four thousand pounds, and, after all, the piece itself was said to have been the dullest show of pantomime ever put on the stage. But this may be doubted. Garrick himself had excellent taste, and the French stage, at this time, was pre-eminent in "*décors*."

Nothing, however, could have been more spirited, and, at the same time, more temperate, than Garrick's behaviour. His partner, as we have seen, was for yielding at the first; Garrick, less dismayed, for making a further attempt. When the unlucky dancers had been sent away, about ten days later, a scene more dramatic than anything in the bright comedy,

appointed for the night, took place. As Roscius made his *rentrée* in *Archer*, there were angry murmurs of "Pardon!" "Beg pardon!" on which he advanced slowly, bowing, with infinite respect, and at the same time, infinite firmness. He then explained how he had been treated — wantonly and malignantly — by individuals, both as respected his property and his character. He gratefully acknowledged all the favours that had been heaped on him during his career, but declared, that, unless he was that night permitted to perform his duty, to the best of his ability,—he was above want, and superior to insult,—he would never appear on the stage again. This spirited and feeling address, in which he showed how deeply he had been wounded by the treatment he had received, had a surprising effect. As he spoke, all murmurs died away: what he said went home to every heart. They seemed to feel a reproach and a deep shame for their lawless behaviour. For a moment there was a pause,—then a shout, prolonged for many moments, made the old rafters ring. In all the records of theatrical difficulties, there is nothing to equal this victory. Managers in such a situation have been often defiant, often pusillanimous, but there is nothing approaching this spirited declaration, which he was quite prepared to carry out. Murphy and Davies, his two biographers, omit all mention of this creditable scene. Yet Murphy was engaged at the theatre, and must have been actually listening, and Mrs. Davies was playing in the first piece.

A few days later, he received from his young friend Patu, a truly French letter of condolence. It shows us a Parisian's view of the whole affair. "O mon

ami, mon cher et digne ami, quelles nouvelles," &c. "It would, indeed, have only been natural that your mob, that mob whose rage makes us laugh here, should have sacrificed their ludicrous craze to the deep obligations they have to you." He was delighted, for the sake of the English nation, and sorry for the sake of his own, that the nobility had shown such gallantry. He could have wished *en bon François*, that *all* had behaved like the mob. He sincerely hoped that his friends' zeal for those "que vous nommiez avec tant de raison, *your French adventurers*, ne vous fera qu'un tort très passager, et que votre *mob* vous rendra justice lorsqu'il aura envè son *punch*." They had heard in Paris, that, after an interval the Chinese Ballet had been called for, by the very persons who had damned it.

There were some comic incidents, growing out of this unhappy affair. The usual dribble of worthless pamphlets set in, with scurrilous titles, such as, "The Dancers Damned, or the Devil got Loose at Drury Lane." A small French hack-writer had found his way to London, with a letter to the great Mr. Garrick, from Patu, of which letter, through an accident, no notice had been taken. He rushed into print, with a letter on the Chinese Ballet question, signed with the great name of Voltaire. It sold well, and the sapient "Monthly Review" seemed to think it was by Voltaire. "After that," said its author, "see how these English '*gens* de pudding et de bière' fell into the trap." He also said, I know not with what truth, that some theories of international law contained in it, caused great discussion at Cambridge, and led to one gentleman founding two prizes for essays on the subject—a

troupe of dancers thus leading up, strangely, to political economy.

Though Garrick had suffered so much by the unlucky French dancer, he good-naturedly never lost sight of him afterwards, and employed him, as his agent, in all his Paris commissions. He was associated with unpleasant recollections. Several years later Madame Noverre wrote to Garrick from Lyons: "as for me, monsieur, I had always but one opinion of your politeness and your *galanterie*. I know well that you are the Anacreon of England, and the Roscius of your country." She, however, could not give such testimony to "Monsieur Lecy," his colleague, who did not appear to her to be "amiable." Years afterwards, when the Festival was all but forgotten, Noverre was writing to the English manager in the same old strain, offering to forego splendid offers from Vienna, the French opera, &c. Garrick was willing to take him; but the "prudent Lecy" had no liking for the experiment, and poor Madame Noverre's impression as to his not being "amiable," in her French sense, received confirmation.

At the other house, Barry, newly returned from Dublin, was declaiming with a renewed passion and sweetness that caused a fresh *furore*—this too with the disadvantage of having lost his tender *Juliet*, Mrs. Cibber. Instead he played with a lady of slender gifts, but whom he had infatuated with his charms. In that fine bit of old-fashioned exaggeration, the "Rival Queens," with *Statira* and *Roxana*, superb in their declamation, he was literally enchanting. The piece was mounted with great pomp, and superb dresses. He was the impassioned and melting lover, the furious

and phrenzied warrior, by turns; his agony of remorse thrilled all hearts, and his madness was terrible.* The tragedy queens, Woffington and Bellamy, had their furious jealousies behind, as well as before, the curtain; and an unseemly squabble arose between the two ladies, which Foote—acting at the same house, and in pieces with them—with a disloyal personality, chose to make up into a farce, for the entertainment of the town.† Presently he was to revive the old comparison between him and Garrick, by appearing in *King Lear*. His fine figure, and melodious voice, had made him so popular, that this was seized on as a representation infinitely superior to Garrick's; yet there was no competition intended by either of the players, certainly not by Garrick, who, as far as I can discover, played it only four times during the season, and not once, after Barry had begun to play. This self-denial was the more praiseworthy, as the best judges admitted that he was superior; and, indeed, considering Barry's special gifts in tender-lover parts and heroes, his voice, eyes, figure and grace, four splendid advantages that would carry all before them, he would scarcely have suited the old, distraught king. He was too stately, and too tall, and in the mad scenes started and took long and hasty strides. Garrick had all the fruits of study. As usual, an epigram or two went off, happily hitting the nice distinction between both. One was by Mr. Berenger:

> "The town has found out different ways
> To praise the different Lears;

* "His dying groan was *distressing*," says Davies.

† It was called "The Green-room Squabble." But no tie or sense of decency could restrain this wit.

To Barry they give loud huzzas,
To Garrick—only tears."

Another was quite as happy—

"A king—nay, every inch a king,
Such as Barry doth appear;
But Garrick's quite a different thing,
He's every inch King Lear." *

But Mr. Taylor, who saw both these famous players in this part, unhesitatingly decides for Garrick; and though his recollection was a little dim, recalled the white handkerchiefs fluttering in every box as Garrick acted; whereas, though he had a sense of Barry's fine and handsome figure, there was a general air of coldness over his reading.

This new season, also, found Mossop back again under his "envious" rival's flag. He had returned from Ireland, where Garrick had taken care to recommend him strongly to the good offices of Lord Hartington. He was, indeed, infinitely above petty resentment. This year, too, showed his surprising tact in discovering useful recruits, and his company being strengthened with a young actress from Richmond theatre, later to be the vivacious Mrs. Abington, with Miss Pritchard, and Foote, the rivalry between the theatres was carried

* Theophilus Cibber, still writing against Garrick, sneered at the first of these, and affected to consider it came from Garrick himself. It was false, too, he said, "for 'tis as certain that Garrick has had other appliances besides tears; as 'tis true that Barry, besides loud huzzas, has never failed to draw tears from many of his spectators." He then furnishes an epigram in reply to each :—

"Critics, attend, and judge the rival Lears,
While each commands applause, and each your tears;
Then own this truth—well he performs his part,
Who touches—even Garrick to the heart."

He also had a retort for the second—

"When kingly Barry acts, the boxes ring
With echoing praise—aye, every inch a king.
When Garrick dwindles, whines, th' assenting house
Rewhispers aptly back—"a mouse! a mouse!"

on with renewed spirit. He was good-natured enough to play his *Romeo* for the young *débutante's Juliet*, and what was more indulgent still, played his *Benedick* to her untrained *Beatrice*. But though she had many fascinations, a beautiful face, that was seen bathed in tears, as her mother led her on, her attraction was not enduring. On the first of November, 1756, he appeared in a new character, one that was to be always popular to the end, and which perhaps he did not think would be the one in which he should make his last bow—*Don Felix* in the gay "Wonder."* He refused "Douglas"—one of the few mistakes as to speculation he made in his life, but accepted Foote's amusing "Author." It is well known how the latter took care the victim he gibbeted in this piece—who was a friend, and a very great intimate of his own friend Delaval,—should be in the boxes to see himself held up to ridicule.

Garrick was now carrying out a curious little whim—training a small dramatic class of children, whom he brought out in a little piece he wrote for them expressly. But though dramatic talent is not to be even fostered by such means, he was repaid by the experiment producing him at least one valuable actress —Miss Pope. At the same time, while his ranks were thus strengthened, those of the other house sustained a serious loss in the abrupt withdrawal of its leading actress: and on one May night, in '57, Garrick must have been brought word of the strange and dramatic scene, that had just taken place at the other house.

The stage career of Mrs. Woffington had indeed

* He played it no less than nineteen times that season, a great run for that time.

closed. It was long remembered at Covent Garden Theatre, how, when she was repeating the passage in *Rosalind's* epilogue, "If I were among you, I would kiss as many of you as had beards that pleased me," she faltered, gave a piercing scream, and tottered to the wing. That night she was given over, and she lay at the point of death for many days. She never recovered, and lingered out two or three years. We can scarcely accept the story of her conversion to Methodism, and of her devoting the rest of her life to piety. Such might have been the case; but the embassy of "Colonel Cæsar of the Guards," which was not long before her death, is scarcely consistent. The story of her building the alms-houses at Teddington is placed to the account of the same change of life; but it appears she had no part in such a charity.* On her death-bed, however, she sent for Mrs. Bellamy—her old enemy—the "Rival Queen," who had dared to dress against her, and owned to her, that she had once got an admirer to show Mr. Fox a letter of Mrs. Bellamy's, in the hope of injuring her with that statesman. This certainly seemed an act of grace.† To her the English stage is infinitely indebted, not merely for a legacy of fine and varied acting, but for a previous lesson of duty to herself, to the theatre, and to the public. The testimony of prompters and mana-

* Mr. J. W. Cole took the trouble of investigating this point, and discovered that the almshouses were built a century before. A new one indeed was added more than twenty years after her death, to which she might have contributed.

† The way in which it was received was characteristic. "I own I could not refrain from being much surprised at the wickedness and meanness of the intended injury. And though my humanity prompted me to forgive an offence which seemed to lie so heavy on her mind, I left the lady as soon as possible, to reflect upon the illiberality of such a proceeding." Woffington died in March, 1760.

gers to this loyalty, are extraordinary. She often played six nights in the week, and never was known to have those "occasional illnesses which I have seen," says one who knew her well,* "assumed by capital performers, to the great vexation and loss of the manager, and disappointment of the public." "She never," says a Dublin stage-manager, "disappointed one audience in three winters either by real or affected illness; and yet *I have often seen her on the stage, when she ought to have been in her bed.*" "To her honour," says another friend, "be it ever remembered, that while thus in the zenith of her glory, courted and caressed by all ranks and degrees, she made no alteration in her behaviour; *she remained the same gay, affable, obliging, goodnatured Woffington, to every one around her.* Not to the lowest performer in the theatre did she refuse playing for—out of twenty-six benefits she acted in twenty-four!" Two warm and graphic pictures—and a most satisfactory tribute to her merit. She had an equal concern for the dignity of the drama in her selection of characters. In this she resembled Garrick. We have seen how she chose for her first appearance in London the part of *Sylvia*, and not that of *Sir Harry*, which would have infinitely more recommended her to the men about town; but she was always striving after the higher characters of comedy.†

She was always ready to take an inferior part in a play, when even the leading character was hers by

* Hitchcock.

† Her *repertoire* included such varied characters as *Ophelia, Lady Brute, Rosalind, Helena, Mrs. Sullen, Lady Betty Modish, Cordelia, Lady Anne, Mrs. Ford, Lady Townly, Portia, Belinda, Maria, Viola, Isabella, Jane Shore, The Lady*, in "Comus," *Desdemona, Lady Macbeth, Estifania, Constance Violante*,—characters all of the "first force" and most refined class.

right; and she has been known to resign *Ophelia* to play the *Queen*—to take *Lady Percy* instead of *Lady Anne*—and carry out the same principle in many other pieces, to suit the interest of the play, or convenience of the manager. This principle obtains on the French stage, where the interest of the piece appears to be considered the first object; but it may seem old-fashioned to the English players of our time.

Thus the old romance had ended, and that short career—not twenty years in length—was stopped. But decay had already set in—the old charms had already begun to lose their spell—the fine face had been worn by sudden and mysterious strokes of sickness—the voice was growing more shrill—and her admirers had fallen away. These were warnings that a life of racket and dissipation could not go on.

Garrick must have heard of this tragic finale to his old love's career with regret;* and we know that when the sick and broken creature was lingering on at Teddington, for a couple of years more, he showed his old regard by an act of true kindness. Over her grave in Teddington churchyard may be now read a conventional inscription. We might almost prefer the simple praise of the warm and humble friend, "she remained the same gay, affable, obliging, good-natured Woffington!"

* I have discovered among the Dublin Patent Rolls a list of "converts," who made a formal adhesion to the Established Church of the country, and her name is among the number: "filed at Tholsel, January 22, 1756," barely a year before, while she was squabbling with Mrs. Bellamy. This shows the truth of the common story, so often told, of her conforming to obtain a legacy from old Owen Swiney. A creature of her life was not likely to adopt or abandon any religion from principle; and she had, in fact, long before, given up the faith she had been born in. I find, in Chetwood's little book, a prologue spoken by her in the invasion times of 1745, in the most violent "anti-popish" strain.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

THE MANAGER.

CHAPTER I.

TATE WILKINSON.—THE COUNTRY TOWN THEATRE.—THE MIMICS.

1757—1758.

THE new season of 1757-8 had little that was noteworthy in its theatrical management, save that the manager appeared in the new character of *Biron*, with great success—in a poor piece of Home's, called "Agis;" and also, in a lively and humorous farce of Murphy's, "The Upholsterer," which, with a little alteration, would, even now, bear revival. Some of those old farces are more properly comediettas, and their humour was the humour of character, not of impossible situation and grotesque mannerism. Shirley's "Gamesters" and "Henry IV." furnished the manager with the new characters of *Wilding* and the *King*.

At the end of the season he lost Woodward—an admirable comedian—but the loss was in some sense lessened, by the addition to his troop of the graceful and gentlemanly O'Brien. Woodward's desertion was attended with a display of rapacity and greed quite characteristic. He was well worked, but he had the largest salary ever given to a comic player, with an

extra benefit for his harlequin labours. He was not content, and wished to tie the managers down to the strange agreement, that they should in future give him as much as they should *ever* give to any performer. Garrick could not agree to this: and Woodward went away to Dublin, to lose all his savings, in a most disastrous speculation, to return penniless, and with true meanness, try and ingratiate himself with a London audience, by abuse of the people whom he had left. To them he had the hardihood to return later, but was hooted from the boards, and not allowed a hearing. The stage, certainly, if it contributes a handsome chapter to the history of human folly and meanness, can also illustrate the truth that honour and manliness are the best policy in the world.* Garrick in the next season, 1758, took up the character of *Marplot*, in which he hoped to eclipse the recollection of the deserter Woodward. But his fine face was thought not to be vacant enough. Rather when a character has been long in possession of a performer it becomes identified with *his* face.

Garrick, unhappily destined to see more of the ungracious side of human nature than any other person, now encounters Doctor Hill in the new and strange shape of a farce writer — a piece called "The Rout," which was put into his hands to be played for an hospital.† He was perhaps afraid that it would not be received well by Garrick,

* Foote, though taking Garrick's pay, seems to have some share in stirring up Woodward to this "strike." In the half-bantering way, with one of those "good things" in which he tried to mask his ill-nature, he told him he was made "a common hackney of," and in consequence of the ground gone over in his Harlequin feats, &c., was entitled to be paid by either time or distance.

† Not for the Marine Society, as Murphy says.

or the public, if he gave his real name, and it was announced as being from the pen of "a person of quality." Everything about this queer adventurer was to be in character,—in a few days he threw off his disguise, and demanded a benefit. Garrick would have readily gratified him; but when the audience discovered the author, they would not endure his play. Garrick paid dearly for his weakness, and found this gad-fly stinging him in all the newspapers, attacking him with verses and doggerel. He held up Garrick's pronunciation, in "A Petition for the Letter I," which he said was quite neglected by the actor; and who, like Kemble, later, was turning "virtue," and "fiercely," into "vurtue," and "fersely." There must have been some truth in this charge, as Garrick was nettled into a sort of retort, which had some wit, or, at least, smartness: and in which he hoped "that *I* might be never taken for *U*." More bitter was this thrust at the doctor's quack medicines:

> "Thou essence of dock, valerian, and sage,
> At once the disgrace and the pest of this age:
> The worst we can wish thee for all thy damn'd crimes,
> Is to take thy own physic, and read thy own rhymes."

Really witty was a second attack that appeared in a few days:

> "Their wish must be in form reversed,
> To suit the doctor's crimes;
> For if he takes his physic first,
> He'll never read his rhymes." *

* I find among Garrick's papers the first draft of one of these epigrams—which is very poor indeed—

> "Your own recipe take, try the force of its juice,
> And by that we shall judge of its merit and use."

Murphy's absurd claim to be the author of the condemned farce, tempted him to scribble on Murphy also:—

> "The piece appears—wise M—— makes his bow—
> For who so foolish as to claim it now."—Hill MSS.

Garrick had a final cast in a very happy shaft which transfixed the quack doctor, and silenced him.

> "For farces and physic his equal there scarce is;
> His farces are physic: his physic a farce is."

For its point, brevity, and Hudibrastic turn, its severity, and, at the same time, comic aim, this epigram deserves a very high place.

During the season the audience were entertained with a fine *spectacle*, and their favourite as *Antony*—in Shakspeare's play—but here again he failed, wanting height and dignity for the part. Another new piece was the quarrelsome Murphy's "Orphan of China," which at last came before the public, after many secret vicissitudes, to be related presently. By this time he had "made money," and was ready to advance a substantial sum to his friend Lord Hartington, then Irish secretary, to pay off a mortgage. That nobleman continued very friendly to him, though at Burlington House the strange caprices of "My Lady," and the curious confusion that seemed to reign in her household, made harmony not a little difficult. Lately there had been a quarrel; now everything was happily made up. But at Southampton-street, with his charming wife, whose advice in all matters, even in points concerning his theatre, was becoming invaluable and necessary to him, he found comfort and relaxation. Once inside that house, he seemed to lay down all anxieties.

The success of Foote in his own department stimulated imitators, and one of these, whose history is otherwise contemptible, brings out passages in Garrick's domestic life, which are not a little characteristic. As this person was always an enemy, his testimony becomes of curious interest, and is valuable in the highest

degree. Leaving, therefore, the round of artificial life which we have been following on "the boards," we shall now see a little of that green-room life, which the great actor so adorned; and of the private relations with friends and acquaintances, with those secret troubles and annoyances of which he had such a large share.

On one morning a letter was brought in at Southampton Street, introducing a young man who wished to go on the stage. Garrick received him kindly, listened to his declamation, which was poor enough, and comforted the aspirant by telling him that his shyness was a very good sign of success. This young fellow had hung about the green-room at Covent Garden, and for all this shyness, was a pert, forward, impudent *gamin* whose precocious talents of mimicry had been overpraised by friends. He offered to "take off" some of the well-known actors to show the manager his gifts. "Nay, now," said Mr. Garrick, in his peculiar mixture of hesitation and repetition, which made his "talk" a favourite subject of imitation, "Nay, now, sir, you must take care of this, for I used to call myself the first at this business—" But the young fellow knew the manager's weak place. He began, leading off with Foote. The likeness amused the manager immensely, and the performance was repeated. "Hey, now! now—what—all," went on Mr. Garrick. "How—really this—this—is—why, well, well, well, do call on me on Monday, and you may depend on my doing all I can for you." This broken style of speech was Mr. Garrick's characteristic when addressing his inferiors, and was, in fact, his *managerial* manner, and may have been found very useful in helping him to a sort of vague generality,

without committing him to any positive declaration. It was not a bad auxiliary for one who was asked for so much, and had to refuse so much.

On the Monday the youth came again, and was welcomed warmly. He was told that inquiries had been made about his widowed mother, and that he was to be put on the books at thirty shillings a week—a fortune indeed. The youth's name was Tate Wilkinson, who has left behind a very curious history of himself and other players, which is a mass of truth, falsehood, and blunders; a mass, too, of meanness, vanity, and of egotism, so transparent that it becomes easy, for the reader himself, to supply the true causes of various incidents which the author sets down. Of the "dirty" jealousies of the green-room—of the tale-bearing, the adulation, flattery, and vanity of that curious kingdom, no such graphic or more disagreeable picture has been preserved.

This indulgence to young Wilkinson, as well as all Garrick's subsequent kindness, was not, as he insinuates it was, from delight at Mr. Foote being caricatured, but may be much more naturally explained. Wilkinson's father had been rector of the Savoy chapel, where he had been in the habit of performing marriages, in defiance of a severe marriage law, recently passed. Vernon, an actor of Garrick's company, had been married in this fashion, to a Miss Poitier, and the manager, always anxious that order and decency should characterise everything belonging to his theatre, sent for the culprits. He was assured they were married, the certificate was produced, and then it was discovered, it had been performed in this illegal way, by one Grierson, the deputy of Wilkinson. George Garrick,

the attorney, had married the daughter of Mr. Carrington, a king's messenger at Somerset House, and at his instigation the law was put in force, the unfortunate clergyman tried, and sentenced to transportation. He died on shipboard from the shock and disgrace, and there can be little doubt that Garrick was anxious to do all he could for the son of the man on whom he had so indirectly brought such misfortunes.

"I'm on the wing, young gentleman," went on Mr. Garrick, "and have to be at Hampton to dinner, so my time is short;" and then begged of him to repeat his imitations. When he got to Barry and Woffington, in "Macbeth," Mr. Garrick was highly amused, and laughed heartily; but when Wilkinson stopped, a concealed laugh was heard, and a green double door opening, revealed the charming Mrs. Garrick, who had been placed there by her husband to listen—"a most elegant lady," she seemed to him—who apologised with true foreign grace, owning that when he came to Woffington she could not restrain herself. Here, perhaps, was the true woman's triumph over a rival. There was a tempting vision of a little breakfast-parlour beyond, whence they had both come in.

Mr. Garrick behaved with true kindness to the youth, giving him golden advice, first to be sober, to be always perfect in his part, no matter how small or contemptible; and when he went a strolling a few days later, he spoke to some respectable actresses to look after him, and be kind to him, and have him much with them so as to keep him out of mischief.

Wilkinson would seem not to have taken this good advice. His was indeed a contemptible nature, stuffed with vanity and mean suspicion. The cheap

applause of the supper table has overset many wits. His behaviour to his kind patron was of a piece all through. A small part had been sent to him in "Coriolanus," and he actually thought he had annoyed the manager by taking it, but he had determined to make it a means of exhibiting his own detestable out-of-place mimicry of Barry. No doubt he could not keep this design to himself: for at rehearsal, as soon as the manager's eyes fell upon him, he broke out into his usual odd interjections—"Why hey, now—what hey, a—I think now that you—why—*why*, Cross—how now—here you—you have sent this part to this lad; I must not trust him with this *Volscius*. You know I must have some steady person to depend on—Packer now hey, Packer—for if Wilkinson does it, he will be at some of his d——d tricks, or be taking off, or some d——d this or other. *Do*, Cross, take the part from him, and we will get him something else." The company, always obsequious to a manager, and always enjoying each other's mortifications, laughed and smiled, and Mr. Garrick turned to them, laughing too. "Did you ever see now such an *exotic*. Why, he would have destroyed my whole play, and be d——d to him."

The manager passed over much petulance, and even insolence, for the youth was scarcely nineteen. He good-naturedly allowed him to go on strolling tours; and to one of these we owe a charming little picture, which, as it shows Garrick in a very engaging and pleasant view, I shall be pardoned for dwelling on.

It was the day of strolling companies. England was divided in theatrical "circuits," which the country managers went regularly, like the gentlemen of the

law. Engaged on one of these, Wilkinson had found his way down to Portsmouth. His picture of the place is very graphic, full of drumming and drilling, with the fleet lying out in the roads, and "the gallant Rodney" on shore. It was all drawbridges and lines, and military gates and posts, where the visitor was stopped and questioned. Officers of the navy and army filled the streets. The little theatre of the place was sure to have support from such a constituency.

The company was a strange and motley one. A Mr. White was *jeune premier*, who lisped, and pronounced Garrick "Gaa-ick;" with Moody, newly come from Jamaica; a stout Mrs. Osborne; a Miss Kitty White, whose mamma was the amusement of the profession, for her rambling talk and strange blunders. There was always crowded houses. The officers were glad to know the droll Wilkinson, and even "the gallant Rodney" was specially courteous to him.

One night, when he was playing *Hamlet*, and Moody, as *Gravedigger*, was shovelling away up to his middle, the manager plucked him by the sleeve, and whispered hurriedly, "Take care, for Mr. Garrick is in the pit!" We may conceive the sensation behind the scenes; every one thinking that the eye of "the London Manager" was on him or her. It was near the end of the play, so Wilkinson could not well make out the great actor, and went home to bed, thinking the whole was a mistake. But next morning came a message from the Fountain Tavern with Mr. Garrick's compliments to Mr. Wilkinson; would he come and breakfast with him? Surprised and overjoyed, the actor hurried away, and was greeted heartily at the Fountain Tavern by his old manager. Nothing could

have been more charming, or even engaging, than Garrick's behaviour. He was out, he told the other, on a little holiday, staying with a Dr. Garney, out at Wickham, some eight miles off—an old friend to whom this visit had been promised for years. Doctor Garney was a retired physician, who had made his fortune, and was greatly respected over all that part of the country.

Mrs. Garrick was there also; and Mr. Garrick said he had been charged by her, and the doctor, to make Mr. Wilkinson fix his own day, and come out to them. "A visit," added Mr. Garrick, kindly, "which we shall all return." After breakfast they went out to see the town, Mr. Garrick actually leaning on Mr. Wilkinson's arm—"an honour I dreamed not of." They walked on the ramparts, saw the dockyards, and all the time Mr. Garrick was asking about his young friend's prospects, and how he was doing, and congratulated him on being such a favourite. Indeed, it needs not Wilkinson to tell us that, "Whenever Mr. Garrick chose to throw off dignity and acting, and was not surrounded by business to perplex him, he had it in his power to render himself a most pleasing, improving, and delightful companion." He was in such good spirits that at lunch-time he had a bottle of hock made into a cool tankard "for luck."

On the appointed day, Wilkinson drove out in a post-chaise to Doctor Garney, dressed in gold lace, like a gentleman. He was received by Garrick, as he says, "as his son." The doctor and his wife were "good" people, and made him welcome. So, also, did Mrs. Garrick. "She was, in truth, a most elegant woman; grace was in her step." Garrick showed him

the place, which was charming,—"a little paradise," —with exquisite views, gardens, conservatories, and a lofty observatory built by the doctor himself. He "ran and skipped like a lad of twenty." He delighted Wilkinson by complimenting him on his dress, merely objecting to the buckles, which were large for the *mode*, and rather too like a sailor's. The actor's heart was rejoiced at being treated "like a man of fashion" at dinner. Garrick spoke of the benefit night, and, turning to the doctor and his lady, said that he would take it as an obligation to himself, if they would give their patronage to his friend, Mr. Wilkinson. At ten o'clock, after a pleasant game on the bowling-green, Mr. Garrick saw him out to his chaise, gave him some parts to study, and said he hoped there would be no impropriety in fixing a bespeak for Friday; "and we desire, Wilkinson, you will fix on a favourite character, and do your best for the credit of both: and d—n it, Tate, Mrs. Garrick expects you will have a dish of tea ready after her jaunt, by way of relaxation" (this was an allusion to a Monologue): "and if you disappoint us, Doctor and Mrs. Garney and all the party will be very angry, so take care." Thus ended a very happy day for the young actor. And though the proverbial prudence of Garrick may have had much to do with these civilities—for this little gnat had the power of annoying and fretting him—a fair share must be set down to his own true good nature, and good spirits, now that he was "out on a holiday."

We may conceive the sensation Wilkinson's news produced in the company. But he was not to have the lion's share, as he had fondly hoped. There was a sort of *émeute*, each actor being eager to have his

favourite and most conspicuous part, so as to catch the eye of the London manager. Mr. White, the *jeune premier*, very dirty and unshaven about his face, and fond of morning gin, asked, with bitter contempt, "Who is Mr. Ga-ick? Mr. Ga-ick has no command over the Portsmouth company. I think Mr. Ga-ick cannot be displeased with my *Macheath*, though I want no favour from Mr. Ga-ick." All combined against Wilkinson's monopoly, and the "Beggar's Opera" was fixed on, as giving a fair chance to all. Wilkinson might indeed have his Monologue, and a short leading part, as it was for his benefit.

All the genteel people of the neighbourhood hearing of the "bespeak," and that Mr. and Mrs. Garrick were coming in, crowded to the little box-office; and when Friday night came round, there was really a crammed house. The "Beggar's Opera" began, but the great party had not come. The first act went by, the second began; and then actors and audience began to grow dissatisfied, thinking they had been brought there under a pretence. In particular, Mr. White was scornful and angry, some of the best bits of his *Macheath* having been played through. But towards the end of the act, the party from Wickham entered, and took their places—the eyes of the whole house on them. It was noticed that Mr. and Mrs. Garrick, and party, paid the closest attention, and applauded heartily. We may be sure that night was long remembered at the Portsmouth little theatre; and it seems a fresh picture, and its primitiveness and rustic character, coming after the London worldliness, must have been enjoyed by Garrick himself.

After the play, there was supper at the Rainbow

Tavern, at which various local persons of distinction came in, and paid their compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Garrick. Before them all, Mrs. Garrick very delicately and kindly thanked Wilkinson for his performance. At some time past midnight she retired, having to sleep at the house of one of Doctor Garney's friends, these good people "not hearing" of her staying at a tavern. Mr. Garrick, who, says Wilkinson, "never failed in attention to his lady," would not suffer her to go with the servant, and wrapping himself up in a handsome sea-captain's cloak which belonged to Mr. Wilkinson, attended her up the street. When he returned, he said he was quite pleased with his walk, as it had made him acquainted with Mr. Wilkinson's snug *roquelaure*, which he thought would be exactly the sort of thing for him during the winter months between Southampton Street and the theatre, and save him many a sedan-chair journey. He therefore commissioned Tate to get him one in Portsmouth, and bring it up to London. It was a very pleasant night. They sat till past three. Great consideration and homage was paid to the illustrious guest, who never appeared in so pleasant a light. The whole of this scene does, indeed, exhibit him to the greatest advantage—the guest of the good, honest Garneys, his old friends—free, unrestrained, not "stuck up," and full of an engaging *bonhomie*. Such treatment, at least, should have laid the young actor under fast obligation.*

* Later the actor, wishing to pay a complimentary visit to Dr. Garney, determined to ride out. His description of his adventure is delightfully *naïve* and graphic:—The ostler of the Fountain brought to the door a very fine-looking horse, and asked him if he rode much. The other "assured him the contrary." "Because I beg, then, sir, as you are not a jockey, that I may take those spurs off." He then set off, and for the first mile or so,

This season also saw the entry of another good actor upon Garrick's boards. Foote now found it his interest to ask for an engagement, which was as cheerfully ac-

which was through streets and over drawbridges, "Found it a very delicate matter, either by giving the horse his own way or checking him, to keep him within the power of my art of horsemanship. By degrees, the horse seemed wisely to comprehend that his own self-will and sagacity were superior to his rider's. My ignorance was manifest to the animal, and as he was fully convinced I assumed a government to which I was not by any means competent, he was determined in rebellion, and to himself usurped the reins of power." Having achieved two miles with safety, the horse suddenly set off with fury, throwing his rider into an abject state of alarm, which was increased by finding himself in a narrow road, and the London waggon lumbering on leisurely in front "at which," says Mr. Wilkinson, "this dreadful beast rushed, so that the wheel stopped and checked my right leg, and brought me to the ground, and on my fall, the horse's hind hoof struck my jaw, and made it bleed most plentifully. Providentially the men stopped the waggon, but almost against their will; for they could not conceive, from the fury of the beast, and the supposed misguided rage of the rider, but I was some foolish mad fellow eager to show my horsemanship, neck or nothing." The waggoners were half angry, half amused. "They only damned me for *a feul;* for they were right *zure I mun be mad to ride dumb beast to fright the waggon, like.*" But when he explained it *was* an accident, they laughed heartily, and said, he "should never win the King's plate at Newmarket." He was then helped on the horse's back, who had been grazing all this time, and reassumed the reins, "determined to be very steady, and not venture on the perilous canter any more: a gentle trot at the most was to suffice, and that with all precaution. We were jogging on, as if by mutual agreement, when an officer, going on to Hilsea Barracks, came flying by, calling out, "Your friend Scott dines at Hilsea; do come to dinner, Wilkinson," and went galloping on. My fiery-footed steed, scorning to be outdone in courtesy, obeyed the summons with the utmost swiftness, while, Gilpin-like, I held by the pummel of the saddle, expecting every instant my neck would be broke. I was at the last gasp with this devil of a horse; *for the officer had no thought, but I was determined to outride him, and be at Hilsea the first:* but on seeing the turnpike, I cried aloud, 'Shut the gate! Murder! murder! For God's sake, shut the gate!' At first they did not comprehend me, but on observing my awkward manner of riding on this my flying horse, and my continued cry of 'Shut the gate,' they did so before I got to it; and then another fear instantly arose, which was, that of the horse's despising the barred gate, and leaping over it; but fortunately the creature, either in pity to my fears or regard for his own limbs, or from the custom of stopping at the gate (which I cannot pronounce), halted there, and that suddenly, on a supposition, maybe, that the king's duty was necessary to be loyally paid, to which he was possibly daily accustomed, and to *my astonishment in the midst of horrors,* he pleasingly surprised me by so doing, for he seemed equal to any mad exploit whatever."

From the turnpike man he got a glass of water, and set off again "on the irregular paths of Portsdown;" and here he naturally reckoned the animal had "settled to reason, but on the up hill, down dale, once more he began more swift than ever. For me to expatiate on the wonders I this day performed in the noble art of vaulting horsemanship might make young Astley fearful of a

corded as it was asked; and in one of his brisk, lively lampoons, "The Author," "took off," with extraordinary success, an unfortunate Welsh gentleman, Mr. Apreece. This victim had at last found out that the whole town were laughing at him, and now applied for redress to the author and actor, with whom it being, as Davies says, a question of money, there was to be no room for humanity. He then came to Garrick, and though he mixed his complaints with some bluster, was received with good nature, good sense, true sympathy, and perhaps a little pleasant humour, and was sent away comforted, with a useful piece of advice.* That advice he followed, and with the best results. Garrick told him that he was merely a sharer in the venture, that Foote and Lacy had a voice in the matter, and bade him, therefore, apply to the Duke of Devonshire, the Chamberlain. He did so, and succeeded.

The unhappy gentleman and his lady, indeed, could not walk the streets without being publicly addressed as "Here's Dicky!" or "Here's Becky!" On the very day of a benefit, when Wilkinson and Foote were on the Drury Lane stage, busy rehearsing "Mrs. O'Shocknesy," a new personality, arrived the Lord Chamberlain's order peremptorily forbidding the piece. It was too late to appeal, and nothing could be done. To the small mimic it was only the deprivation of a short burst of buffoonery; but the greater one was quite overcome. He stood there, shocked, pale and dejected at being thus restrained from exhibiting his

rival, *and dare me to a trial of skill.*" It ended by horse and rider tumbling down an uneven hill, and rolling over to the bottom.

* Apreece even talked of challenging Foote, which only provoked a laugh from Garrick. "My dear sir," he said, "he would shoot you through the guts before you had time to suck two oysters off your wrist."

victim. Even Mrs. Clive, who had been jeering him on the idea of his playing *Shylock*, almost sobbed over the blow that had overtaken "her dear Foote," and poured out execrations on the tyrant Chamberlain. But there was no remedy, and another piece was substituted.*

As the following Christmas drew on, the youth improved in his special department, and the manager still bore his pertness and forwardness with surprising temper. The two mimics were at the one theatre; and we may conceive the awkwardness of the situation with so contemptible a rival in his own department as Foote considered the other. Garrick's toleration, or, if it must be, his fears of these two drolls, was to draw him into an absurd and worrying complication, and his weakness certainly compromised the dignity of the theatre. Wilkinson's Memoirs — "low" as they are, written in the worst taste, not merely full of bad English, but almost *all* bad English, rambling and garrulous — have still a graphic nature that makes them interesting; and the little meannesses of the writer are exhibited with so natural and confiding an air, as almost to conciliate the reader. With his aid we have an excellent picture of Drury Lane at a morning rehearsal. We can see the actors all gathered in a group in the cold *demi jour* of the stage, and laughing heartily at

* This was but one in the series of Foote's audacious personalities; in addition, there was actually sitting in the boxes, and applauding with the rest of the audience, the victim of his ridicule, unconscious of his humiliating position. It is almost shocking to think of the proceedings of this unprincipled but clever mimic; for these were but the first of a long line of persons whom he thus held up. And though a vitality, always very precious, was thus gained for his characters,—as being portraits,—it was at the sacrifice of honour and dignity and decency.

the rough and droll Mr. Foote, who is "rattling" away, saying the best, that is, the most personal, things that come into his head. He might be even criticizing the manager, whose acting he always affected to pooh-pooh. "Yes, the hound had a something clever, but no part of his could be put beside old Cibber's *Sir John Brute* or *Lord Foppington*." From Foote came half the stories about Garrick's "stinginess," which he did not scruple to tell before Garrick himself. At the end of a rehearsal he suddenly looks at his watch, "Bless me! how we have been laughing away our time, it is past three o'clock. Have you and Mrs. Garrick enough for a third without infringing on your servants, for I know they are on board wages. Besides, the kitchen fire may be out, if *this be one of your cold meat days*, or one of Mrs. Garrick's fast days." This was considered rare wit, and made the actors laugh; and Mr. Garrick always sensitive and even timid before such attacks, could only laugh himself, a little ruefully. He still would come up with a smile and a manager's complacency, to join, as Wilkinson says, with an easy *affected* affability and equality, which is quite intelligible, and would enjoy and approve with the rest. He, too, would have *his* little story and jest, a little studied and prepared, but which even the obsequiousness of the actors could not welcome with the buoyant jubilee they received Foote's rougher jests. His quick wit and penetration soon told him that Garrick shrank from his strokes as from an east wind. He worked on these fears, and knew that Garrick would be miserable if he was included in the list of Dodds, Melcombes, Faulkeners, Apreeces, Langfords, whom he had taken off. "I know his

mean soul so perfectly," Foote would say to his pupil, "that if I tell him with a grave face I have his figure made and dressed up in my closet, he will do anything for me." With all this, Garrick's enemy owns that he often lent large sums of money to Foote when he was in sore straits,—services which the latter, in his rough off-hand way, always imputed to the "dirty little hound's" fears of him.*

Foote's next plan was to give an entertainment, "The Diversions of the Morning," which had had enormous success in Dublin, and the point of which lay in absurd imitations of the various actors at the other house. This part of the show was Wilkinson's, who appeared as Foote's pupil; but as Foote was the leading spirit of the whole, I have no doubt that, to Garrick, these imitations were glossed over, or kept in the background. Wilkinson's mimicry of Woffington's shrill voice had made the Dublin audience scream with laughter, and, it was hoped, would have the same effect here.

The now broken actress heard of this scheme of Foote and his pupil. She knew how successfully her tones had been taken off for the Irish galleries. The famous Toast had long been "protected," to use the gentle phrase of the day, by a "Colonel Cæsar of the Guards," and this officer now came to wait on Mr. Garrick, to protest against any mimicry, adding he should be obliged to hold Mr. Garrick responsible as a gentleman and a man of honour. It must not be fancied that there was any chivalry in this champion-

* As a picture of the little workings of human motives and human nature, nothing can be better or more admirable than Tate's view of the relations of Foote and Garrick. It is given in his first volume, pp. 223, *et seq.*

ship. She had promised to leave him all her fortune, and the colonel was keeping jealous watch lest she change her disposition. But there was no need so to appeal to Garrick. Will it be credited that the unhappy actress whom the pair of mimics proposed to exhibit, was then lying stricken with palsy, and merely dragging on a wretched year or two of life. From either it was hopeless to expect delicacy or decency. Garrick at once sent for Foote, told him plainly his honour was engaged, and that there must be no approach to "taking off" Mrs. Woffington — an interdict received ruefully enough. The performance went off with great success. Barry, Sheridan, and the obscurer Sparks, who belonged to the other house, were all "taken off," instead, to the great satisfaction of the audience. The whole was new. Foote's admirable versatility would carry anything through; and it was announced for the next night.

Next morning came news that the actors at the other theatre were furious; that Sparks had taken to his bed from vexation and mortification. Foote burst out with his rough "wit," that it must be a d——d lie, "for he had met Mrs. Sparks with two pounds of mutton chops on a skewer for her husband's dinner," a stroke that produced a roar. But in a few days the unhappy Sparks came himself, to beg humbly of the manager that he would take pity on him, and not allow his reputation to be destroyed by this ridicule, and that he was indeed miserable. "Why now, hey, Sparks," was the reply, "why now hey—this is so strange now, hey—a—why Wilkinson, and be d——d to him, they tell me he takes me, and he takes Foote off, so you see you are in very good company."

It is much to Garrick's credit that he listened to this piteous appeal. He went down to his theatre at noon, walked up and down with great state, and then sent for the smaller mimic. He came, full of pride and glee, thinking of compliments and rewards; but the manager addressed him sternly:—"Now—hey—now why will you take such liberties with gentlemen? You never consulted me, or told me you were going to *take off* people, as you call it. Hey—why now—I never take such liberties myself. Indeed I once did it, but I gave up such impudence. You and Foote think you are the managers of this theatre. But to convince you to the contrary—and be d——d to you* —I here order you, before them gentlemen, to give up the practice; and if you dare to disobey my orders, I will fine you in the full penalty of your article." The actors standing around enjoyed this rebuke: for they disliked the companion whose trade flourished by ridiculing their order. He stood there filled with mortification. Mrs. Clive swept by him, and said in her most flippant waiting-maid manner—"Fie, young man, fie! *She* indeed took off actors, but it was only squalling Italian devils like the Mingotti, who came over to take the bread out of their mouths." Mossop then stalked up to him—the true tragedian—"erect with military plan"—"his gills all swelling; eyes disdainful, and hand upon his sword, and breathing hard." "Mr. Wilkinson! phew! sir-r. Mr. Wilkinson, sir, I say—how dare you, phew! make free in a public theatre, or even in a private party, with your superiors? If you were to take such a liberty with

* This was a playful use of the expression, to which Mr. Garrick was very partial.

me, *sir*, I would draw my sword, *sir*, and run you through the body. *You should not live, sir!*" * He then swept away magnificently. This is indeed an amusing scene. When he was gone, Garrick could not restrain his laughter, in the midst of which Foote entered quickly, humming a French song. "Hallo," he called out, "all got together, as if the last act on!" He was all in a bustle; wanted to fix plays with the manager, from whose house he had just come. But Garrick put on an air of "much serious consequence," and told him how things stood, and that there must be no more "taking off" of actors. Foote said nothing and accepted this command. "If, indeed, now," said Mr. Garrick, "if Wilkinson could have taken me off, as Mrs. Garrick says—as to that, now, I should have liked it vastly, *and so would Mrs. Garrick—*."

He had often said jokingly to the mimic, "Hey, now, what would you make of me?" To which the other would obsequiously reply that he never could form any likeness whatever, for his manner and tones were so natural, and his voice "so melodious, that any imitation was impossible." This sort of flattery was the ordinary food served up to the manager by his company; and, indeed, he could not think it flattery, for it was only what he read in the papers every day, and what he heard from every mouth.

On the same night, when the audience found they were to be deprived of their "imitations," a sort of confusion arose, with loud cries and shouting. Mr.

* Wilkinson was a very excellent mimic, and had a very good memory: so these portraits of Mossop's and Garrick's manner may be taken as perfectly faithful. They are exceedingly good and graphic.

Garrick had the "lights lowered" to show that the play was over, and very indignantly accused Wilkinson of having employed persons to get up this riot. It indeed looked suspicious. Foote had to go out and pacify them. He explained the matter and the reason of the omission, which was to avoid giving pain to certain performers—an explanation that was received with open marks of contempt. He then added, with a malice and love of mischief quite in keeping with what we know of his character, that *he believed* Mr. Wilkinson was at full liberty to exercise his talents on Mr. Garrick's peculiarities—and certainly on *his* (Mr. Foote's)—if that could give them any entertainment. This was a true specimen of his humour, and he no doubt often chuckled over it, and told it as a "good thing." The audience were not slow to take the hint. The cry was for Wilkinson, who was in the green-room. The unsuspecting Garrick pushed him on. "Hey, why, now," he said, "as they insist, I do not see that I am to run the risk of a riot in my theatre to please Sparks and the rest of them. Why, if they are not satisfied with your taking off Mr. Foote as a dish, why it is a pity you could not give me. But that, you say, is not possible with success; so, why, now, make haste, and so as you have begun your d—d 'taking off,' why go on with it, and do not in future plague me with your tricks." The exotic was pushed on, began his performance, gave Foote, and was for retiring when the house demanded more; and then, quite overset by this encouragement, he proceeded to give Mr. Garrick in three specimens: from *Lear*, where he raged; from *Biron*, where he was pathetic; and from *Hamlet*, where he was distraught. This was

an unworthy trick, for it was turning the manager into ridicule in his own theatre, and before his own audience. After this, the young fellow complained bitterly that he received no bonus from either Garrick or Mr. Foote for all his labours.

Foote's enmity has, somehow, the happy effect of showing the man he hated in a superior light. Later, very short of money, he accepted a Scotch engagement. "But where's the means?" he said to Wilkinson. "D—n it, I must solicit that hound, Garrick." He did so; and the "hound" Garrick at once lent him one hundred pounds. He was indeed aggrieved, because the other did not give it him "off-hand," and at once, but said he must "see Pritchard, the treasurer, first," on whom Foote might call in the evening, and leave his note. These were not very hard conditions; but it was a little homage which Garrick was not disinclined to exact. That very evening the borrower laid out some of his cash on a feast, at which he told the most comic stories of the lender. He never was so fertile as on this theme. He ridiculed his poetry, and added that "David's verses were so bad, that if he (Foote) died first, all he dreaded was that Garrick would undertake his epitaph." *

* Here was a specimen of the class of stories that circulated in the green-rooms about Mr. Garrick's meanness and "stinginess." A bottle of wine was brought out in the middle of the day at Southampton-street. After the *second* glass, Mr. Wilkinson was asked if he would have more, while at the same moment the cork was carefully replaced in the bottle. Yet when the retailer of this story was a short time after setting out for Dublin by the coach at midnight, he was to experience the goodnature of his patron. He found that he had packed up all his money with his clothes, and with this rather lame excuse posted off to Southampton-street. He found Mr. Garrick in his nightcap, who received him goodnaturedly. The youth's modest request was that the manager would lend him fifteen guineas, to save him the trouble of unpacking his trunk. Mr. Garrick said he was heartily welcome, and made it twenty. Wilkinson says, "I do believe I was here welcome to the sum in

Presently, Foote became poor and "out of work"—for he was at war with both managers, experiencing his customary reverses—and going about, bitterly distressed, with nothing to rely on but one of his MS. farces. Burgundy and claret, and the fine company of lords, had changed to plain Lisbon, and a hack author or two. He was driven to advertise one of his comic lectures at the Haymarket; and Mr. Garrick, nervously anxious about himself, bade Wilkinson bring him an exact account of the whole, and be sure to be in time. His sensitiveness was sure that Foote would not pass *him* by. There was a great house, formed principally of those who knew him, and who paid playhouse prices. The beginning, and first part, was good and animated. It was personal, as might be expected, and very bitter on managers. Excellent and veteran actors, he said, might be seen walking about the streets of London, "picking their useless teeth." Rich was busy with Italians and his singing, with "sneezing duets and the like;" while the manager of Drury Lane was too "thrifty" to allow any crumbs from his rich table to reach a writer. With that penurious gentleman there was no chance for any author. This was only what was to be expected from Foote. Having exhausted his personalities, the lecture began to hang fire a good deal, and the lecturer to feel himself worked out; so he sat down to his table, with a pair

the humour he then was, even had he never received it again . . . . And dare aver, with sincerity, he at times did generous actions."

Wilkinson's almost comical insensibility to his own interest, is illustrated by his comment on the matter of the "Roquelaure." "This was in fact," he says, "expecting I should have replied with 'My good sir, your kindness is such that I should esteem myself highly honoured by your accepting so trifling a present.' *But I knew my man too well, for without more ceremony he would have accepted of it.* (!)"

of candles, and asked leave to read bits of his new piece "The Minor," which was in a very raw and incomplete state, and produced but little effect.

Everything we hear of Foote is in keeping. Behind him, on the Irish stage, he had left recollections of his harsh voice, his wink, and the smile that fitted "one corner of his mouth." The Irish players noted the theatrical selfishness with which he would never "give or take"—never once thinking of his fellows when in presence of the audience, but trying to engross all the applause and attention.* Even in acting, this spirit made him always turn his full face to the audience, and never address his brethren. There was something gratuitous even in the manner of his buffoonery, as though he would have liked to *know* that it went home and annoyed the object of it. One instance, not hitherto known, is very characteristic.† He was very pressing with the actor, Sheridan, to come to his theatre and see a new piece, placed him in a conspicuous box, and in the front row. He also got Sheridan's family to attend. The actor's amazement and anger may be conceived when he found that he had been brought to see a picture of himself, and that all the audience recognized him, and his known peculiarities in "Peter Primmer."

Later a quarrel broke out between the smaller and the greater mimics. In Dublin, they used to meet in Trinity College gardens, surrounded by friends and admirers, and snort defiance as they passed. When Foote returned to London they met again at a dinner

* O'Keefe.

† A daughter of Sheridan's, the actor, who was present at the theatre told this scene to Mr. J. S. Le Fanu, her grandson.

of Sir Francis Delaval's; and on the host being called out for a moment, Foote burst into a horse-laugh in reference to a discussion on dinners that had been going on—and said, "Did you ever hear such a hound giving his sentiments on good living and dinners? Since my return I have had the satisfaction to dine here six times, and each day a damned large loin of pork on his table, which he calls a dinner? By God, I'll not dine here again these three months, for *I suppose he wants to run his loin against the Beggar's Opera.*" This was of his dear friend. His pupil, on his return, repaired to Mr. Garrick, made a demand for salary for the week or two he had been in London. Mr. Garrick was rather angry at the boldness of this request, after all his indulgence; Wilkinson then took another tone, and "boldly told him" he would make him accountable for the loss of salary and benefit, which he would charge at £200, to say nothing of the breach of article, and they would see what a Court of Justice would say to the matter! On this Garrick foolishly gave way. In truth, they all knew his weak places, and how to work upon them, and this Wilkinson, one of those who tried him most sorely, said, "there was no one like Murphy for calm and leisurely harassing of the manager. That gentleman," he added, forcibly, "*could teaze his soul and gall his gizzard*, whenever he pleased, or judged himself wronged."

CHAPTER II.

ARTHUR MURPHY.

1759.

THE speech quoted at the end of the last chapter may fairly usher in Mr. Arthur Murphy, that clever, epicurean, versatile, Irish, "man of parts"—and adventurer — as he might, in its more honourable sense, be styled. With no other capital than good-humoured manners, ready wit and speech, a certain quickness and "handiness" in doing what they undertook, and often a brilliancy that made them welcome as "good company," a crowd of clever Irishmen had hurried to London, to seek their fortune. Their position was doubtful—they were alone in a strange land, and their success was resented by those to whom they were superior in ability, but inferior in station. This naturally produced a sensitiveness—a jealousy always ready to take the offensive, and a constant suspicion as of something *meant* as an offence. This in part explains the singular behaviour of Arthur Murphy, who was, perhaps, the best illustration of the class.

A kind of "Bohemian," he was to be a player, a barrister, and a hack writer for the booksellers; to live freely and not very decorously, to jumble together circuit and the green-room, the bar and the stage; to write "opinions" and successful plays. Almost within a few weeks he had appeared on the stage at

Drury Lane, and on the no less dramatic boards of Westminster Hall. Yet with this curious unsteadiness he ended with respectability, and was offered high legal office three times. His sudden fits of anger, and repentance as sudden; his "ending their friendship," and renewing it again; his sulks, petulance, and self-humiliation, make up a strange spectacle. He harassed Garrick almost to the day of his death. He had praised him lavishly in his "Gray's Inn Journal." For every service rendered to Garrick during his lifetime a very handsome reward seemed to be expected; and it must be said, no man ever lay a shorter time under an obligation. By this partial support in a new and tolerably obscure journal, Murphy seemed to think he had bound Garrick to him for life, and from that time forth, in all their relations, we see him morbidly sensitive, as though he were dealing with one who was under a load of debt to him, and inclined to shuffle out of his obligation. When, therefore, the journal stopped, and the Irish youth was in debt, he set himself to write a farce, which Mr. Garrick at once agreed to perform. Prior engagements, however, made him fix the beginning of the new season for bringing it out. The cause of offence is almost amusing on account of the far-fetched sensitiveness it betrays. It hurt his vanity, Murphy said, that any one should know he had given the manager a piece which he did not think proper to produce. His enemies would be delighted to learn that he had met with a repulse in his first theatrical attempt. He returned his free ticket. These were refinements too absurd to take up a manager's time with. Yet Garrick, with infinite pains and good temper, tried to show him his

mistake. Even without his free ticket, he fancied that Mr. Murphy would find the doors of Drury Lane open to him as usual; and he "most solemnly declared that he never thought of performing the piece that winter," and had imagined that Murphy would be quite satisfied with its appearing in the new season.

As an actor he showed his sensitiveness quite as much, as when an author. He was treated, he thought, with "indignity;" his situation for eight months, at the theatre, had been intolerable, and he had actually obtained a "meeting" with Garrick, and a friend of Garrick's, down at Richmond, where he might vent all his wrongs. Out of this meeting arose another grievance—that they would not offer him terms—though, as Garrick pointed out to him quietly, *he* ought to have come prepared with terms of his own.*

But it was when he set himself to write a tragedy—or rather, to adapt a play of Voltaire's from the French—that his extraordinary disposition showed itself. It is curious to think that this poor performance should have set loose a tide of the stormiest and meanest passions of fury, envy, suspicion, hatred, scurrility.

Knowing what passed behind the scenes in reference to the acceptance of the "Orphan of China"—the unparalleled arts, the changes from obsequiousness to open bullying, from moderation to rage almost

* The height of his folly was publishing a hot and furious defiance of the Reviewers, on the eve of a new farce of his being brought out. "The author of 'The Apprentice' sends his compliments to the authors of 'The Critical and Monthly Review,' is extremely obliged to them for the favours they have done him; and if they will attend to-morrow night at Drury Lane Playhouse, he will, in a prologue, return them thanks in person for their candour and ingenuity. N.B.—Mr. Varney has directions, if they will send their names and places of abode, to give them tickets *gratis*." This seems like insanity, and the farce of the frantic author barely lived through the night.

frantic, we may guess something of what took place on other occasions. This little episode opens a most curious chapter in the history of human weakness, and often becomes semi-dramatic in its way.

In his "Life" Murphy affects to give a calm, cool account of the quarrel attending on the "Orphan of China;" but it must be said, not an ingenuous one. Too much is suppressed, and what appear to be severe acts of Garrick, are given without the steps on Murphy's side which led to such acts. In 1756, and not two years later, as Murphy makes the transaction begin, Murphy had three acts of his play ready. A meeting was appointed at Berenger's, Garrick's friend, and it was there read. Murphy's sensitiveness detected a coldness in the manager's reception of his work, which he at once set down to other causes than disapprobation. He thought Mr. Garrick wished "to crush his labours in the bud." He burst into a fury, and poured out all that he had on his mind, with great heat and violence. A friend called on him afterwards, soothed him, showed him there was no ground for such absurd suspicions, and got him to write an apologetic letter, owning the mistake, acknowledging he was "quick to err," proud of Mr. Garrick's acquaintance, and hoping that he would act the "Orphan" at his own time and pleasure. In the interval the angry author had demanded back his play, and offered it to the other theatre, where it does not seem to have been welcomed heartily. Garrick, in his answer, said that this step was an utter bar to his receiving back a play that had been thus withdrawn from him.

Stung to fury by this rejection, Murphy sat down,

and only a few hours after the first penitent letter had arrived, Garrick was amazed at receiving another couched in such offensive and outrageous terms, that the writer later wrote to withdraw it, and long after made it a condition of reconciliation that it should be given up. In this he threatened revenge and attacks in the papers. Garrick, wounded, wrote back that the friendship so warmly desired, and which he so freely gave, he now as willingly took back, with an assurance that it should never incommode him again.*

It may be admitted that he had some little ground for suspicion against the manager. He had heard that another "hand" was busy on a play on the same subject; but this idea was only encouraged *after* Murphy had so hastily withdrawn his play. Voltaire's "Orphan" was a very sure card; and Dr. Hawksworth's a more practised "hand."

Murphy in the "Life" omits all these details; but owns that, perhaps, he was "swelled with too much pride." He is even willing "to pass a censure on himself;" but his next step in the business was more outrageous. The man who had for years made himself notorious by his almost exaggerated praise of his idol, dealt now in abuse quite as exaggerated, and commenced what he called by the gentle name of a "paper war," no other than a series of coarse attacks

* This letter of Garrick's is endorsed by him with satisfaction: "*This my best letter.*" Parts of it are certainly admirable, especially the turn of this passage, in allusion to Murphy's advocacy in the "Gray's Inn Journal." "I have always declared that my private resentments shall never interfere with the public entertainments: so Mr. Murphy may be assured, though he should publish twenty volumes of abuse upon me, that when he sends me a dramatic performance that I think will succeed upon the stage, I certainly shall perform it in the best manner I am able; nor will I on the other hand, receive one whose only merit should be that its author has published the same quantity of panegyric on me."

in the papers. This inconsistent and ungenerous behaviour *he* could extenuate by such a plea as the following:—"He knew that the anxiety for fame was the manager's foible. To the *slightest* attack he was tremblingly alive all over. *The writer took advantage* of that failing, and opened a fierce campaign." Only the dull candour of this confession can excuse such conduct.

A few months later, a friend of Garrick's, Vaillant, distressed at the quarrel, and knowing how acutely Garrick felt all newspaper attacks, tried to make the matter up. Murphy hints, a little ungenerously, that this was an embassy. But through these good offices, Murphy wrote to Garrick, made an *amende*, and everything was as before, save as regarded the unlucky "Orphan."

Time passed away. Murphy engaged in politics; did service to his party, and one day was asked to dine at Holland House. They then began to talk of the rejected play. Fox asked to see the piece, read it over with Horace Walpole, and both pronounced that it was "improperly rejected." Such is Murphy's story. Garrick dined at Holland House the following Sunday, and, during dinner, Walpole and Fox repeated lines out of the play, to Garrick's utter surprise. He at last said—"I perceive you have been reading what I have been reading?" "Yes," said the other, "and we have been admiring what we are sure you admire." An opinion from such a quarter was enough to throw Garrick into one of his weak fits of indecision. Perhaps he had made a mistake. A few days later he wrote to beg that the play might be sent to him for reconsideration, saying that, "in his hurry he

might have passed an erroneous judgment." The result was, that in a week's time he sent it back, with a very polite note, to the effect that Mr. Garrick was prepared to act it early in the following year. This is Murphy's account, and if we may accept it as a strict acceptance of the play without a qualification as to its suitability, it gave him an advantage. Garrick's version, however, was, that his objections to the plot, &c., were still to be removed. His behaviour was, besides, marked by a generosity that should have bound the other to him for life.

Murphy's family was in difficulties. His brother was going out to Jamaica. His mother was a charge on him; thus, so far as his struggles went, he was entitled to some sympathy. On this renewal of intercourse he had a farce by him, "The Upholsterer," which he began to press upon Garrick, but who was afraid to touch it from its political tone. He soon guessed, however, the meaning of this eagerness, the outfit of the brother, &c.; and this "stingy" man, who for his thrift and nearness was the butt of a hundred jesters, from Foote downwards, sent a private offer of assistance—and "such an offer" as covered Murphy "with confusion." Garrick sent him a supply of money; more, too, should be forthcoming when wanted. "All I desire in return is that you will not make any speeches on the occasion. *Your letter has said too much*, and all I shall say is, that I am happy it is in my power to convince you *how much* I am yours, —D. G."

These were true coals of fire. Garrick's kindness brought out the raptures, which pecuniary gratitude, the most obstreperous of all *effusions* of the heart,

could prompt. "You are determined to overwhelm me with civility and friendship. . . . Mr. Garrick's head and heart would be of use to any man in England, and to me the offer is an honour."

He should have recollected these transports only a few weeks later, when in exultation at the success of his farce, he began again to press his "Orphan" on the manager. In nothing is a manager so helpless as in the matter of date and time for his production of plays. No one is more the creature of circumstances or conflicting interests: a truth which Murphy's theatrical training might have taught him. He now affected to believe that there had been an engagement to bring out his play *at once*, and on discovering that this could not be done, all his professed gratitude disappeared. He burst into an aggrieved letter. He was sorry Mr. Garrick did not think proper to explain himself. He looked on the question as "highly unlucky, nice, delicate, and only likely if agitated any more to furnish matter to the talking world;" (one of Murphy's favourite threats to his patron was to publish all their letters, and see what the "talking world" would say then). He supposed he must admit that his hopes had been over sanguine, and that Mr. Garrick was not explicit enough as to time. He wished to put an end to "wrangling" and "to pursue his studies in peace;" and with this view proposed that the piece should stand third after two other new ones, and be produced next season or the season after, in its turn. There was something highly offensive in all this; but Garrick tolerantly endorsed the letter—"a complaining letter about the 'Orphan of China.'" He heartily agreed to the arrangement, merely adding that as their mis-

understandings had been so unfortunate, any future negotiations should be conducted through a friend. But he added also a reservation, which Murphy never seems to have taken into account—"*the right of judging of its fitness to appear upon the stage.*" In fact, the truth was, *the play had never been submitted to Garrick*, who had only read portions of it.

In October, 1758, then, Garrick sent for it once more, understanding that it was at last completed. Even then, though writing with obsequiousness, Murphy adds a postscript almost offensive—"that whatever was to be said, *he hoped* it would not reach him through the channel of a *little, mean, paltry Irish talebearer.*" *

The result was that, after a fortnight's consideration, the manager returned it—not with "a peremptory declaration" that it was inadmissible, as Murphy says, but with an offer to see him and explain what he found fault with, or take the trouble of writing it down. Murphy wrote back to demand reasons in writing, saying, sneeringly, that a personal interview only led to "conversation wit," and it would be highly desirable to know Mr. Garrick's opinion, as Murphy's own opinion was backed by persons whose understandings *are* not thought inconsiderable.† The reasons were sent: and then he took a new tone, and told Garrick plainly that being in possession of his promise, "he would not be trampled on by any man

* This, I suspect, refers to Derrick, whom he had before insinuated was one of Garrick's agents. "I defer the *limæ labor* until I am favoured with Mr. Garrick's *opinion of the piece.* . . . Whether the whole will alarm the passions of an audience, &c., *must be left to your determination.*" These passages in Murphy's letter show that the play was to be received subject to approval.

† This of course referred to Walpole and Fox.

whatever." He obtained a meeting at Vaillant's, which his suspicious soul imagined was the result of successful intimidation. A very angry discussion ensued; but, as usual, Garrick gave way, and himself proposed to refer the matter to Murphy's own friend, Whitehead. He concluded—"As I have really no time, health, or inclination to continue these illiberal wranglings, I hope you will excuse me if I am silent henceforth." He might well allude to "an unkind return for the best wishes and the best offices in my power." Murphy again retorts, threatens "publication;" argues about the criticisms on his play, adding a sneer about "you who *rung a bell among the Turks*" (alluding to the blunder in "Barbarossa"), and concludes with—"Whenever you are called upon, I am sorry Mr. Murphy cannot appear in your defence; truth and his own feelings for very indelicate treatment, have, I am afraid, retained him on the other side."

Whitehead's decision soon arrived from Bath. He had professed merely to say whether he himself approved of it; now he went further, and declared he thought the public would also approve. But he proposed many alterations. Garrick at once loyally gave way, and took up the piece with ardour.* Whitehead seems to have been enthusiastic. He attended at the green-room, when Garrick read the play with magnificent declamation and emphasis, as even Murphy admits. Alterations were proposed, but Whitehead, "with great politeness," overruled everything; and

* Davies's account is all at second-hand, especially in his imaginary dialogue on the choice of a referee, whom he wrongfully makes Murphy select. He also gratuitously adds, "The manager was not a little mortified."

when Garrick suggested a serious change in the last act, the poet interfered with "an elegant" compliment —"There are so many beauties in this play, that, for the sake of us who hereafter may write plays, *I beg we may have no more!*" This absurd speech was, of course, only fresh triumph for the author, and more "putting down" of the manager.

Murphy could not meet him in the same spirit. Garrick wished the play to be put off for a month, saying if it were not, he could not do the leading character. This was a fresh grievance. "You had an opportunity, by acting genteelly on this occasion, of making me blush for some things that have happened; *but revenge perhaps is more agreeable.*" The part was then given to Mossop. Garrick later offered, with unruffled temper, if there was a delay of, say, a fortnight, to undertake it still; and this arrangement was grudgingly accepted.

Then the charming Mrs. Cibber fell sick, and it seemed likely that she would not be able to play *Mandane*, and Mrs. Yates was set to "understudying" the part. She was then little known; but under the author's instructions she made such a figure at the rehearsals that Garrick, with great warmth, seized the author's hand, and whispered his delight and confidence of success. "In *seeming rapture*," says Davies, with his little malignity,* yet stupidly proving the zeal and hearty interest of the manager.

On the 25th of February, 1759, the long battled-for "Orphan of China" was brought out with all splendour.

* He gives an account of an elaborate subterfuge, by which the manager was to be trapped into having Mrs. Yates in the part, and which is really unintelligible.—*See* Davies, vol. i., p. 230.

Boquet's scenery for the unlucky "Chinese Festival" could now be utilized without offence; and to add to these attractions, Garrick surpassed himself. Mrs. Yates was magnificent. From that night her reputation was made. Fitzherbert had made up a special dinner-party for the author, on the day of performance, at the Rose Tavern, close to the Theatre. It included Hogarth, Foote, Delaval, and some more. The author's heart was in his mouth; and during dinner a letter was brought in from Mrs. Cibber, lamenting that she was not to play, but saying she would put up her prayers for his success. "Catholics," said the lively Foote, whom neither friend nor occasion could restrain, "always pray for *the dead.*" But when success was assured and the house ringing with applause, the same great jester came running to congratulate.

Looking back on the whole of this odd controversy, it is impossible not to own that Garrick was right—right in the logic as well as in the calmness and moderation of his conduct. It makes a capital illustration of Garrick's curious character. He showed an indecision and want of firmness—more developed, when he discovered that the other was magnifying the matter into a serious business. From his good-natured deference to every one's advice, and his morbid uneasiness at what he heard, he had become uncertain, and in small matters found his judgment change with the hour. This was one of his infirmities. But it must be recollected that many a noble nature would have considered the game scarcely worth the candle, and would have preferred the luxury of punishing so annoying an adversary, to any profit. This was but one little episode, though Murphy had the effrontery to

write in his "Life," that it was their first and last quarrel. For years after, almost to the end of his days, Garrick had to endure a whole purgatory of insults, resentments, and angry bursts, always met by the same gentle treatment, by remonstrance, explanation, good-nature, and concession. And yet this man, the object of this kindness, could say, after his patron's death, "Off the stage, sir, he was a wretched, sneaking fellow." *

All through the business Garrick felt he was dealing with an intemperate man, and, in matters where his passions were roused, an unscrupulous one. He was most cautious, therefore, in every step he took, and kept copies of his own letters; and when the controversy grew envenomed, prepared regular drafts of his "case," heads of argument, &c. A most prudent course; as every line he wrote would be shown about at the coffee-houses, and every friendly admission taken advantage of without scruple.†

* Mr. Rogers used to relate the dialogue with great humour. "Mr. Murphy, sir, you knew Mr. Garrick?" "Yes, sir, I did; and no man better." "Well, sir, what did you think of his acting?" After a pause—"Well, sir, *off* the stage, he was a mean, sneaking, little fellow. But *on* the stage,"—throwing up his eyes and hands—"Oh my great God!" This was the invariable formula; nothing less general could be obtained from him.

† Garrick was obliged to take the trouble of making abstracts of these letters in this fashion:—"A. M. to D. G.; 27 January, 1754. Determined to relinquish 'Covent Garden Journal,' and returns ticket. Had first given a piece to the manager. June 13, 1756.—Declines meeting at Clutterbuck's, to enter on needless expostulation. November 26, 1756.—Owns there was a mistake as to the 'Orphan of China.' 'Nothing of this kind can happen between you and me. Shall leave the stage.' December 30, 1757—A letter of friendship and reconciliation in consequence of a meeting at Mr. Vaillant's, entreating the former one to be cancelled. February 24, 1758.—Has no doubt of G.'s sincerity, but has of his company. December 30, 1759.—A civil one—'two agreeable, genteel fables for you next winter, &c. &c."—Forster MSS.

CHAPTER III.

THE PLAYWRIGHTS.

1759.

MURPHY represented only one of a whole class. There was a race of needy but clever adventurers who looked towards Garrick as their prey, and followed the same tactics to obtain his aid and patronage. London swarmed with lively but unscrupulous men, who were living, as the phrase went, upon their wits. Among this class, the weak points of the manager were notorious. The favourite tactics were first cajolery and flattery, and when these failed, hectoring and terrorism.

The world will scarcely credit the acts, the folly, the hatred and fury, which the writing of a play seemed to engender. Once the tragedy or comedy was complete, it became a sort of Frankenstein to its writer, a dreadful monster of his own creation, which drove him to strange and almost frantic acts. The accepting a play was but feeding the appetite. It was ground for a fresh claim. The rejecting a play was the unpardonable sin. Did a man write a poem, or a history, or compile a voyage, and take it to a bookseller, that potentate's decision given bluntly, was accepted without a word. But with a manager it was a different thing, and with Garrick more different than with anyone else. He was, besides, himself sensitive, timorous,

and above all shrank from giving pain, and we may believe had a rather foolish complacency in his own gifts of diplomacy, and his power of writing "a good letter."

If ever there was one of his clients who should have been bound to him, it was Mr. Ralph. This man, whom Pope had found a corner for in the "Dunciad," giving him two wonderful lines :—

> "Silence! ye wolves, while Ralph to Cynthia howls,
> Making night hideous—answer him, ye owls!"

—had a favourite play called the "Astrologer," which he had offered to many managers, and at last induced Garrick to bring out, at Drury Lane in 1744. It was a complete failure — such a failure, that the audience had to be dismissed. Garrick, who had a sort of regard for him, later actually went to Mr. Pelham and obtained a pension for him of £200 a year.* This was enough, and it was observed that he at once seemed to take a dislike to his friend. Davies believes it was from another play being declined. Later this grudge was worked up into open hostility, and a bitter and well-known pamphlet, which shall be noticed later, full of attacks on Garrick and his management, was the very triumph of ingratitude. On this even Garrick's forbearance gave way, and he renounced his acquaintance.

As we are on this subject, we may take a further view of the way he was harassed by the play-mongers—a persecution for which he was himself not a little accountable. The hope of keeping every one

* Garrick himself told how the minister received his request. He had made it a rule, he said, never to purchase or reward political writing; "but as Mr. Ralph is your friend, I shall do it with pleasure."

"in good humour," is the most futile and delusive of human weaknesses; and from any one in office a decisive answer causes far less hostility, than a refusal given after excuses and postponements—meant to be soft cushions to break the fall.

One of the most curious features in these little histories, is, that men, otherwise respectable, who enjoy with posterity a reputation for decency and honour, should in this relation with him, become changed, and descend to the meanest display of spite or intimidation. Only yesterday has been published a pleasant Scotch memoir of Smollett. But I can find no mention in it of his behaviour to the manager, who had been obliged to decline his very poor first play. Garrick had read in "Roderick Random," a bitter and rancorous sketch of himself and his friend Lyttleton. He had seen his own portrait under the name of *Marmozet*—an awkward association, and welcome to those who were fond of talking of "Little Davy," and the "little hound." Yet, as he read this offensive picture, he must have only dimly recalled a raw Scotch youth, who had plagued him years before with a Scotch tragedy called "The Regicide," and who had pursued him from town to country; had struggled to reach him through patronising lords, in short, by the circuitous agency by which literary labour had then to be advanced. The author "had been in company with a gentlewoman who, having heard of my tragedy, told me she was acquainted with the wife of a gentleman who was very well known to a lady, who had great interest with a person who was intimate with Earl Sheerwit." Thus he would seem at last to have wrung a sort of conditional approbation

and half-promise from Garrick. If we may accept the whole of *Mr. Marmozet's* behaviour as a literal portrait, which represents that actor as praising the piece to the author's face, suggesting alterations, promising to consider it next season, and finally pronouncing it unfit for the stage,—for such was very much Garrick's way,—it really amounts to no more than the good-natured excuses with which a considerate and over-delicate man deals with a troublesome and persevering claimant. Garrick was not a manager at the time, merely an actor: the piece itself was wretched, as the author was to discover, when he appealed to the public. Yet the conventional promise, excuses, &c., which every new play-writer must expect, scarcely deserved such personality as the following:

"It is not for the qualities of his heart that this little parasite is invited to the tables of dukes and lords, who hire extraordinary cooks for his entertainment: his avarice they see not, his ingratitude they feel not, his hypocrisy accommodates itself to their humours, and is of consequence pleasing: but he is chiefly courted for his buffoonery, and will be admitted into the choicest parties for his talent of mimicking Punch and his wife Joan."*

He also brought in Lacy as *Mr. Brayley* and Rich as *Vandal*, the latter described with the same personality. "The poor man's head," he said, "which was not naturally very clear, had been disordered with superstition, and he laboured under the tyranny of a wife and the terror of hell-fire at the same time."†

* "Roderick Random," chap. 63.

† That this was meant for Rich is plain, from an allusion to his jumble of religion and pantomime:—

Not content with this attack, he had followed it up with another, in which he made *Peregrine Pickle* criticize the great actor and Quin, in the most contemptuous terms. The whole is unworthy, and it always brings a suspicion that the spite which can thus vent itself in print, might not stop there, if any other channel opened.

Some years passed by, and a nautical ardour had seized on the British public, after the execution of Byng,—a season a little awkward for any such jubilation. Smollett, to suit the present humour, wrote a piece in the "Rule Britannia" vein, where the changes were rung to the tune of "British Tars" and "British Oak,"—in which a native of each of the three kingdoms was introduced; and had the effrontery to submit it to Garrick. But faithful to the prudent principle, which made resentment subordinate to his interest—for Smollett was at this time connected with "The Critical Review," an organ of much personality,—or, perhaps, making due allowance for the heat of youth, he received the piece, which was indifferent enough, and behaved with extraordinary generosity and conciliation to its author. He even suspended the regular rules of the theatre in his favour, gave him the fourth night for his benefit instead of the ninth,—a most important change as regards the "run" of a piece; played *Lusignan* for his benefit; and wrote him a warm letter about a mistake which had been made in the charges of the theatre. This, he said, "had given him much uneasiness;" but

> "Fraught with the spirit of a Gothic monk,
> Let Rich, with *dulness and devotion* drunk,
> Enjoy the peal, so barbarous and loud,
> While his brain pours new monsters on the crowd."

though it was very reasonable to charge the full expense, he could not agree that Dr. Smollett should make the first precedent. He therefore returned him the difference.*

Smollett was naturally touched by this kindness, which might be called "judicious." Already gossips, unable to account for this new friendship, were supplying motives, or trying to sow new dissensions. They were busy reporting that Smollett had gone about speaking disrespectfully of the manager, who had himself come obsequiously soliciting this piece. Smollett wrote in fear, lest such stories should have been carried to Garrick. He repudiated them warmly, and added this remarkable acknowledgment:—"Perhaps the same insidious efforts had been made to influence former animosities, which on my part are forgotten and self-condemned." †

Not long after, when "The History of England" appeared, Garrick found there an *amende*, in the shape of a handsome and critical compliment. Reviewing the social progress of England, Smollet wrote:—"The exhibitions of the stage were improved to the most exquisite entertainment by the talents and management of Garrick, who greatly surpassed all his predecessors of this, and perhaps every other nation, in his genius for acting, in the sweetness and variety of his tones, the irresistible magic of his eye, the fire and vivacity of his action, the elegance of attitude, and the whole pathos of expression."

The success of "Douglas," the Scotch play, which

* The night's expenses of the theatre, "before drawing up the curtain," were about ninety pounds. It used to be forty-five. On a benefit night, the charge to the author of an original piece was sixty guineas; to an adaptor, eighty guineas.

† Life of Smollett, prefixed to his works.

had a "run" at Covent Garden, seemed to have been welcomed by a party—not for the author's sake—but because it was believed that Mr. Garrick, who had declined it, was infinitely mortified. Here, as in the case of Dodsley's "Cleone," and Murphy's "Orphan of China," which was almost forced upon him, they saw proof of his incompetent judgment; or, as it was insinuated, of the mean motives which made him actually postpone his interest to the indulgence of petty spite. It will hardly be credited that this was gravely sent abroad; the authors themselves and their friends believing that the worst motive was at the bottom of this indifference to their talents; and chuckling over the public reversal "of Mr. Garrick's judgment." His biographers take care to chronicle these "mistakes" with infinite zest. It seems absurd to deal with such a charge seriously, yet such matters enter largely into a history of his life. It was the common accusation made by Ralph in the pamphlet "The Case of Authors by Profession," that he would not produce new plays. When we consider the quality of the drama written by the man who put forward this charge—and which is ludicrous from its turgid bombast—the accusation loses all its force. The list of new plays brought forward by Garrick during his thirty years of management, is surprisingly long. There was almost foundation for its being said that he produced too many pieces. With far more respect must be received Goldsmith's somewhat peevish complaints to the same effect; and when we think of the brilliant line of comedies we would have had to relish now—instead of merely two; that had Garrick had but wit enough to have encouraged *him*—and accepted pieces like the "Good Natured Man,"

instead of the bales of "Virginias," "Boadiceas," and such poor stuff, he would have laid playgoers under eternal obligations. Pamphlets were showered upon him, full of complaints, fault-finding, and directions. One Grub Street writer published "suggestions how Mr. Garrick ought to behave." Ralph made the extraordinary claim, that dramatic writers were to be independent of the will of any manager whatever.*

The play of "Douglas," written at Edinburgh, with an ostentatious parade read and criticised by the junto which, under the shifting names of Toper clubs, Speculative societies, and the like, had always affected to be the centre of polite literature and taste, was taken up to London with great solemnity by a party of virtuosi, with a view of restoring the British drama. This seems one of the most singular features during Garrick's management; instead of accepting the motive on the surface that it was unsuited to the manager's taste or theatre, the storehouse of unworthy promptings was ransacked to find a reason. In such a crowd of claimants a judge has but his own instincts to trust to. Here was a play brought up from Edinburgh by an obscure Scotch minister, an untried hand; there was nothing to take it out of the category of the ordinary run of plays. He had discovered what seemed to him serious objections both in the simplicity of the plot and its treatment, which were sufficient reasons.

Davies gives this reason: and Carlyle, Home's most intimate friend, who had transcribed the play, and knew all its history, says, that Garrick had rejected it as "totally unfit for the stage." He talks

* Forster's Goldsmith.

also of his "want of truth and judgment." But it must be borne in mind, that the "Douglas" we read now, was not the "Douglas" offered to Garrick. *That* was full of long and solemn prayers, delivered on the stage, and of strange oaths and extravagancies. It was largely altered after Garrick had rejected it: yet more largely altered the day after representation, and again more altered, after about a week's performance. Garrick, therefore, in all probability, read a crude, long-winded, declamatory production. Dr. Johnson also endorsed Garrick's verdict, and noisily insisted there were not ten good lines in the whole, and these ten he would allow to be picked out separately.* When a weak speech was quoted to him about sincerity and its inflexibility, this wonderful man, prepared at all points, demolished it by a noble passage from Juvenal on the same subject; "and after this," he roared, "comes Johnny Home, with his *earth gaping* and destruction crying!"

The play was taken back to its native town a little ignominiously, brought out at Edinburgh with true rapture, and pronounced the finest thing since Shakspeare. It later found its way to London, was produced at Covent Garden, and had success. Both the biographers chuckle over Garrick's feelings at this turn of fortune, and delight in picturing him consumed with spleen and mortification; and they report with satisfaction—Murphy says it was as "though the manager had brought down a judgment on himself,"—that he was constrained to accept very inferior plays from the same author. But even now it remains more

Mr. Forster has shown that Goldsmith, had he been present, could have quoted five lines, at least, which are certainly "good" ones.

a poem than a play.* And there was this final reason —which was at the time noised about to his discredit —that the leading male part would have been quite overpowered by Mrs. Pritchard or Mrs. Cibber in the female character. But a truer shape of the difficulty was, who was to play *Norval*, which required all the prestige of his name and exertion, and for which he was a little old: and he had no one else of sufficient power to put in the part.

Home had no reason to complain of the manager's future behaviour.† When the new tragedy "Agis," was ready, he at once adopted it. The play was successful, being carried through by a clique and a party. It was a miserable production. Who shall blame Garrick for endorsing such stuff, when

* This view is borne out by a curious ballad, published at Edinburgh, as a parody on Gill Morice :—

"When Garrick had a' 'Douglas' read,
He glowr'd with baith his e'en ;
And stamping with his foot, he cried,
Sic d—d stuff ne'er was seen."

and again :

"Hark ! Carlyle cupples a' my friends,
Braw news I now can tell ;
Argyle my 'Douglas' will protect,
Let Garrick go to Hell !"

See "Notes and Queries," January, 1866. Davies says that great interest was made for "Douglas" at Leicester House, "by some great persons." But it was not until later that the author formed these influential connections.

† Carlyle makes the curious statement that Garrick had even promised to be the reverend dramatist's second in a quarrel. Agis, the play of Home's he accepted, had been declined by Garrick many years before—the author in his disgust going to Westminster, to write on Shakspeare's monument, "I hoped, like thee, to shake the British stage !" It was told with great relish how Mr. Garrick had been forced to take a play which he had once refused. But it had been wholly re-written. Garrick was really attached to Home—as Carlyle remarked—and took the deepest interest in him. "My dear friend," he wrote to him on his success, "joy, joy, joy, to you ; my anxiety yesterday gave me a touch of the gravel, but our success has cured it. I am very happy, because I think you are. Mrs. Garrick has cried over it. Some passages are more like Shakspeare than any other author." *Mackenzie's Life of Home.*

Walpole, and other *soi disant* critics, were in raptures over it? Garrick, no doubt, saw its defects as well as he had done those of "Douglas;" but was too shrewd and prudent a director, to risk giving offence to the powerful clique who were then ruling the kingdom.*

There was a *dilettante* bookseller, Dodsley, who had been a footman — and written verses, "The Toy Shop," and other trifles, and who had come to him with a play—"Cleone," the immortality to which even the meanest scribbler then looked forward. It had been read over, and corrected by, Doctor Johnson—whose most obsequious admirer its author was—and had been submitted to Garrick, who fell into one of the fits of indecision so common with him. He at first approved and accepted, then went back and declined —then sent for it again, and once more declined. There were reasons for this treatment, beyond the studied and secret malice, which detractors were so fond of imputing to these ordinary duties of his office. It was again said, that the part allotted to him was not sufficiently important, and was overshadowed by the heroine's. Yet Mrs. Bellamy, no friend to Garrick, had heard that Mrs. Cibber, who was to play the heroine, was also dissatisfied. The manager, though very friendly to the bookseller, declined it, as "a cruel, bloody, and unnatural play;" and after the

* I possess a very curious pamphlet—a criticism on this play, and which is characteristic, as showing how a piece was put on the stage. Garrick, it was said, was dressed as a Venetian gondolier, to represent a Grecian chief. He fought with infinite spirit and energy, and on the first night cut Havard over the eye, and "hauled about Mrs. Cibber this way and that." There was a procession of white figures, like a religious one, and a dirge, with the leading characters "holding smelling-bottles to the noses of the women."

cries of "murder" from the pit, when he brought on Johnson's "bloody" catastrophe to "Irene," it was no wonder he took fright. Johnson himself, when the piece was read to him, said, humorously, "Come, let us go into the slaughter-house again. But I am afraid there is more blood than brains."* It *is* a most "bloody" play, and would have been now considered highly "dangerous" by a manager. The disappointed bookseller then took it to the other theatre. Rich accepted it. The author could secure a long train of patrons, noble and simple. Lord Lyttleton and Doctor Johnson attended the rehearsals; and it had great success. But the bookseller and his friends insisted that Garrick had purposely fixed on the night of the new piece for a revival of one of his own great characters—*Marplot*, in the "Busybody." Their insinuation was, that he bitterly regretted having let the play go to the other house, and determined, at least, to do what he could to interfere with its chances. From what we know of Garrick, such studied malice is quite out of keeping—the fact being that he had been, as usual, worried by the person he was wishing to oblige, and that then he did not feel himself called to disturb his own arrangements. On the following morning Garrick wrote a warm letter of congratulation, and noticed this charge. He was much concerned to hear such a thing said; for he was certain no injury had been done to the new play. Still, if Dodsley would say what *he* wished to be done to make up for

* He later added a compliment too absurd to be serious: "Sir, if Otway had written this, no other of his pieces would have been remembered." Which can only be received with gravity, on the interpretation given to another famous compliment—of the piece being read, when Homer and Virgil are forgotten.

any injury, Mr. Garrick would comply at once, provided it did not *absolutely* sacrifice his own interests. This meant that he would stop the run of the new piece. It brought out a fiery answer. After what had passed he would ask no favour. Garrick had done all he could to destroy his play. He renounced his friendship, &c. Garrick wrote him back a reply, half good-humoured, half contemptuous, which ran thus :—

"Master Robert Dodsley,—When I first read your peevish answer to my well meant proposal to you, I was much disturbed at it; but when I considered that some minds cannot bear the smallest portion of success, I most sincerely pitied you; and when I found in the same letter, that you were graciously pleased to dismiss me from your acquaintance, I could not but confess so apparent an obligation, and am, with due acknowledgment, Master Robert Dodsley," &c.

But every one was not on the side of the bookseller. Warburton wrote Garrick one of his most characteristic letters. Dodsley was "a most wretched fellow," no man ever met "worse return than you have done for your endeavours to serve him." He denied what Garrick had owned, that the scholars and men of worth "applauded his trumpery,—for a learned blockhead is a blockhead still." The character of Warburton, indeed, comes out in his correspondence with Garrick, with the clearness of a photograph—overbearing, despotic, turbulent, but to his friend always tolerant.

Of a different class to that of the bookseller, was a dangerous fellow, Hiffernan, of whom we had just a glimpse at the Bedford Coffee House. Garrick's imprudence—or prudence, as he would have called it—

made him try and conciliate this man. A guinea from the manager, charitably given as a subscription to some book, laid the foundation for claims; and first presenting a piece called "The Wishes of a Free People," which was declined, and a farce which was accepted and damned, he grew so insolent that Lacy threatened to cudgel him. Garrick, however, was always indulgent, and often helped him in his necessities, which at times amounted to absolute want. He met with the usual return.

Not long after his return from abroad, this wretch wrote "a most bloody libel" both on Garrick and Mrs. Garrick—too shocking to be described; and was preparing to publish it, when a friend of Garrick's happened, by a mere accident, to hear of it. It was wisely suggested that a few guineas would have more effect than any measures of severity; and as Mrs. Garrick was concerned, this was thought the best course. No doubt this extortion was at the bottom of the whole proceeding.

The fellow succeeded in frightening Mr. Foote; and we can actually see that great humourist in a state of abject alarm. He had found some profit in Hiffernan, and would seem to have used him for "dirty work:" such as finding out oddities, &c., for his own mimicry. Foote had given him a dinner now and again, but, according to the usual precedent, the "hack" had turned on his patron. He gave him warning, through Garrick: "Thus stands the account between Mr. Foote and Dr. Hiffernan. For a number of years the latter had, by every means in his power, made constant efforts to serve the former's undertaking and particular claim to representative

exhibition, which sometimes were wanting, and sometimes produced the desired effect." In the same singular style, he proceeded to hint darkly about "a book," the proposal for which was received "in a most cruel, wicked, and oppressive manner." Letters about the book had been repeatedly sent, but "the same uncomplimentary silence was always observed." Then came an interview, when "a cold adieu was bid on both sides at parting." Foote had finally threatened to expose him, and forbade him his theatre, upon which Hiffernan darkly alluded to a letter, about which it seems "*a great noise has been made.* The best way to come to a certainty of the author would be to publish it. He will be soon known by the purport and style."

No wonder Foote was anxious to be free of such a dangerous character. Only the season before he had come behind the scenes, raging against the Duke of Cumberland, pouring out frantic treason and rebellion before the whole green-room. Hiffernan actually sent his letter to the papers, and it was only saved from publication by the kindness of the proprietor, who brought it straight to Foote. This letter must have contained something true, and that touched Foote very nearly, for he wrote in an agony of alarm to Garrick. He called it "an attempt of so black, so malignant, so criminal a nature," that on the whole he thought it should be considered "whether there is not something *immoral as well as impolitic in encouraging a fellow . . who finding how necessary the public good opinion is to every subject of the stage, has, with all the qualities of a footpad but not the courage, extorted money from every individual by presenting, instead of a pistol, a*

pen to his breast." This was rich, indeed, coming from Foote, who had himself subsisted for years by practices differing very little in kind. Did *he* recollect how necessary "the public good opinion" was, not only to players, but to harmless country gentlemen and unfortunates under a cloud? Garrick, as a matter of course, interfered. He had already been charitably exerting himself to better the wretched man's condition, having spoken of him to his friend Hamilton, and meeting him not long before in Long Acre, had humanely listened to the story of his complaints and grievances. He now used this little claim to check any further misconduct. He had long since forgotten the malignant libel with which he had been threatened. Very soon the unfortunate wretch died in abject want, and was found dead in a miserable garret, the place of which he had kept carefully secret from his acquaintances.

Before Garrick went abroad, he used to meet a Mr. Graham, one of the Eton masters, at Hampton, who was teaching his nephews, rode with him at times, and found him an agreeable companion. During the rides, the Eton master talked of a daring dream, engrossing him more than Latin verses. He was planning a classical piece on the subject of "The Duke of Milan," in which there was to be a duke, a *Julio*, and others of the usual lay figures—Italian, perhaps, only in name. He was good-naturedly encouraged by Mr. Garrick, who listened to his account of the story, read a scrap or so of the beginning, gave him hints, and promised—the only promise a manager can ever make—if the whole turned out a good play, to give it a chance at his theatre. Mr. Garrick went on his

foreign tour, and in the interval the Eton master laboured away at his "Duke," finished it, and sent it in for judgment. The manager read it over twice, but was obliged to decline it, and appointed a meeting at the vicar's, to explain his reasons more fully.

The Eton master was furious. He at first did not reply; then wrote a short letter, demanding an explanation. It provokes a smile to find that his "peculiar hardships" were in "*the advice, encouragement, and praises*" he had received. "How astonishingly inconsistent is your present judgment with the expectation you were pleased to form of me." He declined altogether to defend his own writing. The only thing he will agree to, is to refer it to those good judges who differ from Mr. Garrick. (This was the tactic with every play-writer.) "I could refer you to one whom you do not think a flatterer, who has said to me that the language is eminently dramatic. *I would willingly risk the whole on his saying it behind my back.*" It is amusing the piteous pleading authors put forward for their dramatic children. In this instance the Eton master failed. Mr. Garrick coolly refuted his argument, concluding with "Whatever you may clearly *prove*, or whatever you may think of my justice and humanity, I shall entertain a good opinion of them. If you can only think well of them by my acting the tragedy, I must be unhappy enough to lie under your censure, though not to deserve it."

But he had been happy if all applications had been as absurd and ludicrous as that of Mrs. Latter, the Reading lady, who had sent him up "The Siege of Jerusalem," a play that had received the approbation of "an incredible number among the impartial and

judicious." And yet she could modestly admit that it was "raw;" but independent of its merits, she could guarantee success, and was ready to enclose a list of "the gay and great" on whose aid she depended. "Dare I presume to request your reply? Yes, I am *sure,* if you retain the least grain of generosity, you will certainly acquiesce in my favour, and if *so, I have more than two hundred letters to write—some to go as far as Russia.*" From this odd letter we may see how a manager, from his position, would have the best opportunity in the world for becoming acquainted with all the odd twisted types—of whim, variety, greed, and selfishness—that human nature has power to create. And he enjoys the opportunity the more favourably as, unlike ministers and others at the head of great departments, he himself has no agents between him and his public, and, to carry, on his business successfully, must see and hear for himself.

Mrs. Griffith was the most industrious and persevering of the class; and having been tolerably successful with an adaptation from the French, "The School for Rakes," plied him steadily with proposals, plans, "first acts" of a new piece, that would carry all before it. When such were deemed inadmissible, she, too, would defend her work. At one time she was all beseeching and piteous entreaty, with her miserable circumstances, &c., at another she was full of flatteries and admiration. But when a negative came, the tone all changed. More difficult was it to deal with a piece that came to him under the patronage of his friend, Sir Joshua. It is a little test of the affectionate regard borne to the amiable painter, that Johnson should have made an exception in his friend's favour

and read the piece *quite through*. For others he merely looked over plays, just as we know how he looked over a book. The play was by Reynolds's nephew. It had been sent in at an unlucky moment, Garrick being *pledged* to no less than *seven* five-act pieces, to be got out within two years. So he candidly told Sir Joshua, he could give no hope until after that time, that is, supposing he approved of the play.* This excuse of the seven plays having precedence was thought disingenuous, and a mere pretext, as within the month he accepted one from Jephson. But a manager is not to be bound down to every light expression he makes use of, but, as in other professions, must be guided as circumstances arise.

The history of "Dido" is a yet more excellent specimen. It was sent back as unsuitable. The author at once appealed. It was submitted "to eleven gentlemen of acknowledged discernment in literature. And what was their judgment of the piece?" the author asks. "Why, truly, so diametrically opposite to yours, that I should incur the censure of vanity by committing to paper even one-half the praises they have bestowed on the piece." To which opinion then was

* Sir Joshua seemed to be not a little annoyed at this way of receiving his relation's performance, which he was almost sure would be taken. He wrote to have it returned at once without a reading, as the author "would undoubtedly understand the answer to be an absolute refusal to take it at any rate." Garrick was hurt in his turn at this view. So far from refusing plays, the complaint was that he accepted too many. "'Did Sir Joshua know him so little as to suppose he would refuse a play 'so recommended?' When a disappointed author hears that I am so provided, it is natural for him to imagine and to say that *I* do not care to receive his performance, but that my acquaintance, Sir Joshua Reynolds, should think that I would say the thing that is *not*, to clear myself from a performance recommended by him, Dr. Johnson, and Mr. Burke, *is not a little unpleasing to me*." To clear himself from so disagreeable a suspicion, he offered to show his plays, and tell the names of the authors in confidence. Sir Joshua wrote back warmly and generously—more than satisfied.

he to incline? "Is it not possible, for *even* Mr. Garrick to be deceived in his judgment?" He then proposed submitting it to a junto of judges, or to go before Mr. Whitehead, the universal playwright's referee, and who indeed seemed to decide with them always. Garrick was naturally a little angry, and wrote in reply; but the author was not to be put down, and rejoined, with a cool and measured impertinence. As he now saw there was no chance for his piece, he might at least have the satisfaction of working on Garrick's sensitiveness: "Am I the first person that hath dared to suspect your sincerity in theatrical concerns? I am afraid not." The rope-maker, for such was the author, then threw off all restraint, threatened to file a bill in Chancery, to publish his case, and went about everywhere abusing and slandering Garrick. Later he had the inconceivable meanness to come truckling to him with a new comedy in his hand. He was so anxious to return to his old master, "to fight his dramatic battles under the banner of *David King of Drury, a man after the public's own heart.*" The King of Drury was "the ablest manager that ever presided over a theatre," &c. It was now in his power "to secure my friendship, if you think the friendship of one who prides himself on the character of an honest man worthy your regard."

From the Rev. Mr. Hawkins came an "Alfred," but it travelled back to him. The blackest motives were at work. "Remember I formerly gave you offence in the business of 'Henry and Rosamond;' and of all animals, I believe a manager is allowed to be the sorest." Some years afterwards another piece, "The Siege of Aleppo," was rejected, be-

cause "it was wrong in its first concoction." And yet, like so many other plays, it was honoured with the approbation of Dr. Johnson, Mr. Smart, Justice Blackstone, and Mr. Warton, who "without flattery, *those were his words*, pronounced the performance admirable." Quin, too, expressed his satisfaction, and told "my late Right Honorable friend, Sir Thomas Philips," that he would have liked to have played one of the characters. "But the world will shortly judge of all these things" (the usual threat of publication). "After all, sir, I do not desire to come to an open rupture with you; I wish not to exasperate, but to convince; *and I tender you once more my friendship and my play.*"

More characteristic still was the behaviour of Mr. Shirley, the Lisbon merchant, whose "Black Prince," a poor piece, had, "by the friendship of Mr. Garrick, been carried through." * He later sent over another heavy performance, "Electra," which the manager agreed to accept, but could only bring out during the summer months. This was considered so much "contempt." The angry author came to England, having narrowly escaped destruction in the famous earthquake, and at once began a series of bitter attacks on the man who had so obliged and so injured him. The usual ungenerous topics were reproduced, the changes were rung on the stock charges of vanity, meanness, and avarice. Was not Mr. Varney, the boxkeeper, sent round to the houses of great ladies to let them know the nights Mr. Garrick was

* Davies appeals to the author himself for the truth of this, "now all resentment is buried in Mr. Garrick's grave." As such an admission would be at the expense of the play, it is not likely it would have been answered favourably.

going to play? Who was it salaried clergymen to fill the newspapers with puffs and eulogisms of "the incomparable Roscius?" Who was it kept down from a mean jealousy the other performers? This and much more was given in a special pamphlet called "The Prophecy of Hecate;"* but the strain was diligently kept up in the newspapers, by the same "hand." Garrick, much hurt, resented this behaviour deeply; and, apparently to the surprise of the public, and of his biographer, "declared that nothing on earth should get him to act Mr. Shirley's play." But "Mr. Garrick," adds Davies, "however irascible, was far from being implacable. Before he left the stage, amidst other sacrifices to good-humour and good-nature, he put an end to the quarrel between himself and Mr. Shirley," and as an earnest of his good-will—or as a sort of reparation to the aggressor—promised to get Sheridan to accept the "Roman Sacrifice," another performance of this gentleman's. He actually did so, and it becomes favourable evidence of his sweetness of disposition. For as he was then finishing with the stage, there could be no ground for the insinuation, sure to be made on other occasions, that he was buying off hostility.

Now Mr. Mackenzie, the author of "The Man of Feeling," arrives from Scotland, introduced by a letter from the excellent Dr. Robertson. Garrick has had experience of Mackenzie before, having had to wade through a MS. "Prince of Tunis." The Man of Feeling sees *now* how unfit that piece was for the stage; but "*he has begun to work on another subject*,

* I have seen this *brochure*, and it is impossible to give an idea of the low and clumsy personality of its tone.

and will be glad to submit the sketch," &c. Another dramatic figure in this group of friends was that of Dr. Brown, whose ranting "Barbarossa" became one of the stock pieces for lusty tragedians, and whose flat "Estimate" was one of the most successful books of the day. His was one of those rough controversial natures, like Warburton's, and so many of the "Doctors'" of the period. With that bishop he was at one time on friendly terms, who said of him "he has too much honesty to be a court chaplain, and too much sense and sobriety for a city preacher;" and Brown repaid these compliments by an obsequiousness that for a time was almost remarkable. Overset by the success of his book, the doctor projected a scheme for exhausting the whole round of philosophy, beginning with "The Rise, Union, Progress, Perfection, and Corruption of Poetry and Music." No wonder, he said, he felt that he had got into a vast field, and was for a while bewildered. But soon he really had good grounds for such elation, since he actually received a proposal from the Empress to come to St. Petersburg, study the empire and character of the people, and construct a constitution. On this remarkable compliment, he consulted his friends, and it is amusing to see him debating with Garrick, "As to the point you speak of, it would certainly be dangerous to carry it so far, *as to think of removing the seat of empire:* but to reinstate the city of Moscow, and to make it one of the two seats of arts and science, is, I think, not so dangerous. However nothing of this kind will I say to any soul *living but the Empress herself.* . . She is aiming at great things, but seems to be wandering in the dark." But in that very year, 1766, when he and Warburton

were doing battle, he fell into bad health, which ended the expedition, and from the disappointment insanity came on, and he destroyed himself.

To Hawkesworth Garrick had given many little theatrical "jobs;" now the altering of a play, now the writing of a piece. When the story of Cook's expedition was to be told under official inspiration from all the papers, &c., furnished by the Admiralty, then it was that Garrick performed a most friendly and important service. He went to Lord Sandwich,—a quarter where he had already heavily overdrawn his influence, procuring promotion for *other* ungrateful friends,—and secured the duty of editor and historian for Hawkesworth. How valuable this appointment was, may be conceived when the lucky "Hack" received £6000 from the booksellers for his labour. But the severe reception it encountered, the suspicion of infidelity set on foot, and, above all, the strange fact of a lax magazine culling from it all the warmest passages to make a new art of love, preyed on his spirits and drove him to suicide. The unfortunate man had quarrelled with his friend; but this friend wrote in the kindest way of him.

It was curious that Garrick should have lost so many friends, Yorke, Arden, Hawkesworth, and others, by self-destruction.

Such are only a few specimens of the strange beings who clustered round Garrick, pressing their plays on him. A complete history of their proceedings would fill a volume.

CHAPTER IV.

HAMPTON AND ITS CIRCLE.

1759.

We may turn from this curious gallery,—from the gay colours of the stage, to the quieter tones of the domestic retreats, where was the real life of the actor—where was his enjoyment and his treasure —and where, too, is to be seen the best, brightest, and most genial side of his character. "Garrick the actor" has been too much the conventional idea of him hitherto, and it cannot be too often insisted on that he was as remarkable in other directions.

A near view of his amiable character, at his desk, or in his garden, is not in the least likely to diminish the respect and regard of those for whom the stage Mr. Garrick was a source of wonder and admiration. It seems certain that if he had remained at his vaults in Durham Yard,—if he had taken to the Bar, or any other profession, he would have risen, by his virtues and calm good sense, his moderation, and the certain affection and esteem all his friends would have borne him. The name of Mr. Garrick might have figured just the same, in the Boswell gallery of Johnsons, Reynoldses, Goldsmiths, Langtons, and the rest. We shall see him now, in a more private view, when it will be found that the great

tragedian, who was the talk of the town, was not "puffed up," or upset by his position, but was as humble and affectionate, and domestic, as any *Jean Bourgeois* beyond Temple Bar.

Southampton Street was his little town *pied de terre*. It was bound up with the theatre, with business, and interviews. Angry players and playwrights had come in crowds, and sat in the little parlour, and told their wrongs. But his eyes always turned towards the country—to a delightful corner, within easy distance of town, on the very edge of the Thames.

Very shortly after his marriage he had looked out for a country place, and found what suited him on the edge of the common at Hampton. He had lived there with Mrs. Garrick, and liking the place, purchased, in 1754, from Mr. Humphry Primatt, the well-known villa, which will always be associated with his name. About it were pretty grounds, though separated by the high road from a pleasant sward that ran down to the river's edge; where, within a year, he was building that little bit of affectation, more fitted to Drury Lane than to the little country villa—the Shakspeare Temple. This absurdity was just a hint of the greater absurdity that was to come later—his Jubilee. Beside the villa was another house, belonging to Mr. Peele, who left directions in his will that an offer of the property should be made to Mr. Garrick, who he knew fancied the place. It was not, however, to come into his hands without some litigation.* He had

* Sir John Hawkins, who lived close by, at Twickenham, tells a characteristic story about this house. A neighbour also had his eye on the place,—and going to the executors in Garrick's name, actually obtained a conveyance to trustees for his own use. Garrick was greatly concerned on discovering this trick, knowing he would have a disagreeable neighbour; but Sir John

other property, a little estate called Hendon Manor, which was worth some sixteen thousand pounds; not content with which, he fancied some five and twenty acres lying near Hampton, for which he made an offer to Lord Pomfret. That nobleman, however, asked a large sum, which Garrick thought was too much, but was willing to leave it to the arbitration of any two intelligent neighbours.

Hampton was a charming place; and it is easy to understand the Garricks' delight in it—in its pleasant gardens, where the good and simple vicar would come and take counsel with Mrs. Garrick, over the planting of some rare laurel cuttings; and the grounds and flower-beds, with the distant view of the Shakspeare Temple. Here we can see the host and owner in his natural sphere, and in all his natural gaiety, as Miss Hawkins saw him. Sir John Hawkins would drop in, on his road to town, and find the owner and Mrs. Garrick eating figs in the garden. Walpole and his Irish printer, whose fine eyes Garrick would have purchased for Drury Lane at any price, would come over to the Temple with appropriate verses.* Here, too,

showed him "a case in Vernon," which made out the transaction fraudulent. He accordingly filed a bill to set aside the purchase, and on the eve of the hearing sent to Sir John; but when the knight took "the case" down himself to Drury Lane, he found the manager so absorbed in a new procession, as to be quite indifferent to everything else. This he gives as a specimen of Garrick's carelessness and forgetfulness. But the legal reader will see, at once, that the case must have been in counsel's hands—who would have been quite independent of his client, or Hawkins's assistance. Even lately, Peele's House was the subject of litigation.

* "Quod spiro et placeo,
Si placeo, tuum est."

"That I spirit have and nature,
That sense breathes in any feature,
That I please, if please I do,
Shakspeare! all I owe to you."

guests found their way down "to spend the day," and dine, and after dinner wandered in the gardens, and lounged about the grounds. To them was present the figure of their host in his dark blue coat, its button-holes bound with gold edging; the small cocked hat also edged with lace—and the waistcoat free and open. The face and features were never at rest a moment. He would be sitting on the edge of the table, chatting on grave subjects to a doctor of law or music; when the wonderful eyes, darting to this side and that, would see the little boys of his guest scampering gaily round his garden, and he would shoot away in the midst of a sentence, join them, and be a boy himself in a second.* There was one pleasant day when Home, in the flush of his "Douglas" success, took down the brothers Adam, Robertson, Wedderburn, Carlyle, and some others. They brought "golf clubs"—their national game, and showed their host how to play. Mrs. Garrick was there too, growing a little plump by this time, but gay and pleasant, and speaking English perfectly. It was a little curious that one of the guests—Carlyle—some ten years before should have been her fellow-passenger in the Harwich packet when she was the dancer, Violetta, dressed up in boy's clothes. A common mind might have officiously reminded the hostess of this old and awkward acquaintance; but Carlyle was a clever and accomplished man, who had seen the world, and he said nothing. But he suspected she remembered that voyage well. After dinner the wine was carried out to the

* Miss Hawkins. Enemies fancied they discovered a difference in Goldsmith's and Garrick's mode of playing with children,—the former doing it to amuse the children, the latter to amuse himself. Was ever human character so minutely watched?

Shakspeare Temple. A charming sward ran down to the river, and through a leafy archway it could be seen winding and glistening. Carlyle executed a wonderful stroke with his golf, sending the ball down the grass, through this arch, well into the river—a feat which so delighted Garrick that he begged the golf as a present and record. "Yet," says golf-player, who relates it, "this was all only his little vanity;" thus repeating the unmeaning and parrot-cry, which he had picked up in the open thoroughfares of the town.

Here, too, was seen Mr. Beighton, an old clergyman of simple tastes, for whom Garrick was never tired of trying to "do something." He delighted in his books and garden. At his advanced age he had to ride, often across rivers, five or six miles, to his duties. He could scarcely afford to keep a curate, on his modest thirty pounds a year; but Garrick often helped to increase his income, until something "turned up." "My dear friend," would say the vicar, standing among his beloved flower-beds, and taking Garrick by the hand, and giving his head his "usual jerk of affection," "could I have fifty pounds for a curate, and fifty pounds to keep up my little garden, I would feel no ambition beyond it." "And thirty pounds more," Mr. Garrick would add, slyly, "to keep Hannah, your housekeeper?" "Pooh," would say the vicar; "you turn everything into ridicule! Come, let me show you the finest *arbor vitæ* in the country." And away he trotted, forgetting all his wants. Garrick used to plead earnestly for this good old man with all his influential friends. He got his old friend, General Fitzwilliams—who was "about" a royal duke—to promise a chaplaincy. He then introduced him to the Duchess of Portland, at Bulstrode.

"She is very much his friend," said Mr. Garrick, speaking of this visit; "but——" It was so difficult to find what would suit him. Finally, he tried Lady Camden, and her interest with her husband, then Lord Chancellor, who warmly promised to befriend him; not then, but on the first opportunity. "For it would be a mortifying thing for him not to have a living near his present place. We are all quite anxious," said she, "for the good old man. I hope it is no sin to wish an unknown person near Egham to be removed to a better place." The Chancellor sent Garrick word that his recommendation alone would be sufficient, and in a very short time "the good old man" was made quite happy, by a suitable promotion. He enjoyed his new happiness but two or three years, and in 1771 he died, to the great grief of his two friends, Garrick and Camden. Lord Camden had grown to love him, and thought him "one of the best men Christianity had ever produced; and whom we must never hope to see again unless we go to heaven." His dear books—the treasure where his heart was—he was a little nervous about, and shrunk from the notion of their being "put up" under the rude operation of a sale. Yet he had nothing but these with which to show his gratitude to his kind friends; so he divided them into three portions—leaving one to the Chancellor, one to Garrick, and the third to Becket the bookseller, another friend. With true delicacy, the two first friends recalled the pain that had come into his face when he spoke of the prospect of his little collection being broken up after his death, and tried hard to purchase up the other share, and so keep the whole together; but the bookseller,

following the instinct of his trade, was for having the whole sold. This is one of the pleasant things in studying Garrick's life, that it helps to glimpses of true goodness and amiability, and like Goldsmith's story, helps to reconcile us to human nature.

At times, and at very late and inconvenient hours, Doctor Johnson would come bursting in, even when they were going to bed, and insist on his supper. Long after, his favourite sofa was shown and reverenced. Mrs. Garrick herself delighted in her garden. A tulip and a cedar tree were planted there by her own hands, with a "sucker" from the famous Shakspeare mulberry tree. The Shakspeare Temple, separated from them by the high road, was reached by a tunnel. Mrs. Garrick often stopped in it to tell her little story of Doctor Johnson, who was consulted on the matter. Garrick himself was inclined to have a bridge, but "capability" Brown, the famous landscape gardener, suggested the tunnel, in which he was supported by the doctor, who said, gravely, "David, David, what can't be over-done, may be under-done." In the temple was the famous Roubiliac statue of Shakspeare, now in the British Museum. The rooms in the house were low, and not very large. There was a library, a bow-windowed room, the best bed-room, where the bed was in an alcove that could be shut off from the room altogether—a French notion of Mrs. Garrick's. Between Hampton and the Adelphi were distributed Garrick's pictures. In the dining-room over the sideboard hung Thomas Davies, the faithless biographer. The man, whose picture hung in Garrick's dining-room, had the effrontery to write the falsehood that Garrick was so vain that he would

admit no portraits but those of himself, into his house. The truth was, his walls were covered with all kinds of pictures, and his portraits were presented to him by painter friends, who were always asking him to sit. There were the three landscapes by Loutherburg, one of his scene-painters, and which later brought good prices: a small and delicate Guido, on a subject from the Orlando, which had been given to him, and a fine Andrea del Sarto, presented to him by Lord Burlington, at Rome, and which cost that nobleman five hundred pounds. There were also more theatrical scenes—Garrick as *Lord Chalkstone*, as the *Farmer*, and as *Sir John Brute;* also as *Jaffier*, with Mrs. Cibber. But what must have been more interesting than all, here was seen the young and sprightly Garrick, seated with his friend Wyndham, in the foreground of a landscape, painted by Hayman.

About the house, too, was a good deal of rare china, in which Garrick, with a nice taste, was "curious," and the series of pure white china statuettes, issued by the Chelsea Ware Company, representing Garrick as *Richard,* Quin as *Falstaff*, Woodward as the *Fine Gentleman,* and Kitty Clive as the *Lady* in "Lethe." There was a small statuette of Garrick, too, as *Roscius*, modelled by some artist whose name is unknown. On the drawing-room walls was a curious decorated paper, which remained long after. The Shakspeare curiosities, which were the attraction of the Temple, must have been the least interesting of the whole collection. There was a theatrical air about them; and they mostly resolved themselves into different shapes of the eternal mulberry tree. There was the arm-chair made out of the same material, with

carvings from a design by Hogarth — vases, medallions, &c., and an inkstand. There was shown a delft salt-cellar, "which belonged to Shakspeare;" and a very doubtful pair of gloves and a dagger, "formerly belonging to Shakspeare."*

Conspicuous among the choice treasures of the place were the four famous "Election" pictures of Hogarth.† These were hung in the "Bow-room" at Hampton, on each side of the fire-place. They had been shown to Garrick when finished, and the artist told him that he had resolved on putting them up to raffle, as he could not hope to find a purchaser who would give him the price he asked, namely, two hundred guineas. Garrick put down his name for five or ten guineas' worth of tickets; but when he got home, began to think of the trouble and mortification to which such a plan would expose his friend. This was but the beginning; he would have to go round to this friend and that, asking five guineas from each. In short, it amounted to begging. He generously determined to spare his friend such humiliation, went back and purchased the four pictures for the price named.‡ After all, it was a surprising bargain; and some sixty or seventy years later, Mr. Soane was glad to secure them at the sale for seventeen hundred and thirty-two pounds ten shillings. On the walls hung another picture by

* Garrick's enthusiasm for the great dramatist led him into accepting such suspicious relics. The "delft salt-cellar" was later valued at two guineas, and the gloves at three, a price that represented their value as having belonged to Garrick, not to Shakspeare. There was also *another pair* of Shakspeare's gloves in his little museum, which Mrs. Garrick bequeathed to Mrs. Siddons.

† Painted, as Mr. Christie's catalogue set out, in a very modest style, "with breadth and agreeable freshness of tone."

‡ This was told by Mrs. Garrick herself. See "The Gentleman's Magazine" for July, 1823, p. 62.

the same admirable master, representing the master of the house seated at his table, "smilingly thoughtful over an epilogue or some such composition (of his own you may be sure), his head supported by his writing hand, and madam is archly enough stealing away his pen unseen behind. *It has not so much fancy as to be affected or ridiculous, and yet enough to raise it from the formal inanity of a mere portrait.* They are a fine contrast." So was it described by Dr. Hoadly, who saw it, as it was being painted; and the last sentence is a very happy description of the share poetry and fact should have in a true portrait. In this picture there is a pleasant air of reverie about "our sprightly friend," a charming slyness and piquancy in Mrs. Garrick; and the whole seems rather to convey the idea of lovers, than of sober married life.*

Here, too, were many of those surprising theatrical pictures by Zoffany—brilliant, yet deep, in colouring, gay, firm, full of character, and almost rivalling Hogarth in tone and dramatic expression. The charming portrait of Mrs. Garrick holding a mask, was painted when she, the Violetta, had just come to England, and in the heyday of her piquant charms, painted, too, with the best enthusiasm of the artist; for he was at that time one of her admirers.† Here, again, and by the

* It was sold to Mr. Locker, of Greenwich Hospital, for seventy-five pounds eleven shillings. There were other sketches and pictures of Hogarth, one in particular, of Sir George Hay, which went for only five pounds, and which the auctioneer did not know to be Hogarth's.

† This was bought by the Carrs, and very appropriately was hanging over the chimney-piece in the dining-room at Hampton until a few years ago. Mrs. Carr was fortunate enough to secure it for twenty-three pounds. It is now in the possession of Mr. and Mrs. Hill, of Richmond. Zoffany was employed by Wilson to work on his pictures, and at one of the exhibitions Garrick detected a different touch in Wilson's painting. This helped to discover the German artist. Garrick's patronage brought its own reward; for Zoffany's fine theatrical scenes and perfect likenesses of his face and attitudes are our most

same artist, were husband and wife sitting in their dear Hampton grounds, "taking tea," with the river in the distance, and George Garrick angling. There were two small views, from the same hand, of the villa and the grounds. Another token yet again, of affection—the Shakspeare villa, with Mr. and Mrs. Garrick on the steps, and their little dog. These are all so many hints of happiness and mutual affection. To the worldlings of the time such repeated exhibition of their married content, would be *fade* and insipid.

It is remarkable that in the enormous mass of correspondence preserved by Garrick—and he seemed to preserve every scrap that was addressed to him—there is not a single letter of Mrs. Garrick's. The simple reason for this is, that she had no occasion to write to him, as he was literally never absent from her a day. When he went abroad, Mrs. Garrick went abroad with him; when he went to the "great houses" on visits, Mrs. Garrick was taken also. She was invited behind the scenes, listened to the rehearsals, and gave her judgment. The economy of the theatre—its accounts—everything, was carefully looked to by this admirable and invaluable lady. There was a charming delicacy and gallantry in his behaviour to her, the bloom of which was never lost. Nothing was complete in either his business or his pleasure, without *her*. If a new actor was to exhibit his powers at Southampton Street, Mrs. Garrick was laughingly put behind a screen to have her share of the "fun." She

faithful memorials of the great actor. Wilson was furious and jealous, and would seem to have had Zoffany's visits to Hampton watched. Garrick threatened to have the spies ducked in the river. Nothing is more curious than the little odd glimpses these Garrick letters give us of famous people.

had her box at Drury Lane. When Mr. Garrick was painted again and again by all painters, he was most pleased with those paintings where *she* was brought in. There were many husbands who might pay such attentions; but none could rival the charming delicacy, and almost loverlike gallantry, which he maintained towards her to the end. How pretty a story is that told of the Dance Picture! This artist, then struggling, had been pushed and recommended by the great actor, and had just finished a portrait of Mr. Garrick, for which he was to receive one hundred guineas. This was a present for Mrs. Garrick; a place had been already settled on the wall where it was to hang, and the artist had been asked to dinner. During the dinner the latter said, as it were carelessly, that Sir Watkyn Wynne had seen the picture, and offered a hundred and fifty; and, Dance added, he intended to let him have it. This was only the regular treatment to which the generous actor was exposed from all whom he helped or obliged, so he could not have been much surprised; but he was not thinking of that, but of the disappointed face of Mrs. Garrick. "Never mind, dear," he whispered, "you shall have a much handsomer picture than that to look at;" and accordingly, on the next day a very handsome mirror—mirrors were costly articles then—was hanging in the place selected for the picture.

There were some delightful days at Hampton. The Garricks were very important people of the place. No one of the squires about could have seen such good company: they kept up good state, an excellent table, and "did everything" hospitably, in good style. Sir Henry Bate Dudley, a jovial man about

town, and no mean judge, always bore testimony to this.* They drove into town in their well-appointed carriage and four horses.

At this place we see him in quite a pastoral light, and with the air of a *Jacques Bonhomme.* Lord Sandwich, when he was in office, was one year settled at Hampton, at Lord Halifax's house on the Green. A fine turtle arrived with Sir Edward Hughes from Ascension, and a cook had been brought down specially to dress it. The weather was hot, and the turtle would not keep; so it was determined to ask the leading persons of the neighbourhood with little ceremony and at short notice.

A servant was sent over to Mr. Garrick's, who coming into the yard, saw a man in an old "scratch wig," an older hat, and a loose great coat, busy with the wheels of the carriage, and asked him about his master. It proved to be Mr. Garrick himself. The servant was greatly shocked at his mistake, and even begged to be excused for attending in the parlour. But Garrick accepted all apologies in the most good-humoured way, and said that actually a compliment had been paid him, for his coachman was a much better looking fellow than he was. At that turtle dinner there was a large party, the unfortunate Miss Ray was of the number; and Garrick recollected her quiet and modest behaviour. The evening was very pleasant, and the Hampton colony were entertained with dramatic recitations.

Not very far away lived a nobleman and his wife, Lord and Lady Spencer, who were his warmest friends, and who, with a constancy not usual in the

* Taylor. It is necessary to mention little matters like this, as the meanness of Garrick's enemies made his "stinginess" such a favourite charge.

noble persons of that day, remained his fast friends to the end of his life. At their seat at Althorpe, in Northamptonshire, Mr. and Mrs. Garrick were regular guests, and it was at Althorpe, with these kind friends at his bedside, that he was seized with his last fatal illness. There Mr. and Mrs. Garrick, without the least effort, or straining, or condescension on the part of their hosts, found themselves the most distinguished of the distinguished company that assembled there. This enduring friendship is not the least tribute to Garrick's merits. As Christmas came round, always came eager and pressing invitations to Althorpe. The best company assembled there to meet them. Sometimes Lady Spencer fixed on a gay uniform for the ladies of the party; and Mrs. Garrick was told in time of a "certain scarlet and white silk," which was to be got at "Mr. King's, the mercer's"—a good-natured warning, for fear it should be all gone. Her letters are, indeed, most lively, free, gay, and affectionate. No wonder that he endorsed them outside, "a letter from heavenly Lady Spencer," from "charming Lady Spencer," "Lady Spencer's sweet note," "Lady Spencer, always natural!" He would write for subscriptions for a friend's book, and she would send back a string of noble names, with, "you know we are all your toadeaters—at least I can answer for myself." This was in the "sweet note." Then they *must* come to her, "so do not shake your head, and invent any excuses." There were ten or twelve red coats there already, and his "*woula have looked* very smart among *them*." When they did come, she would insist on their making Holywell House their resting-place for the night. "The beds and rooms are

well aired, and more comfortable than at an inn, and that would make the journey to Newport Pagnell very easy for your horses. . . . You must allow us to add that our servants are not allowed to take anything." At this pleasant house he had too much good sense to wish to "sink" his profession, having that true respect for it which made others respect it too. Thus, of a night, Mr. Garrick would sit down and read Shakspeare for the company; though he was sometimes annoyed in finding that Lord March, to whom anything intellectual was not likely to be entertaining, had gone off to sleep. The charming hostess promised that Lord March should never again be allowed to assist at the readings. On another night a very rigid faced lady sat in front, with her eyes fixed on the reader, but without moving a muscle, or showing a gleam of intelligence. Mr. Garrick came to his hostess—"She is a very proper person I am sure; but—but—I cannot read again if she be present."

A more awkward incident, but still almost ludicrous as "a situation," took place, when Mr. Garrick one night stood up in the centre of the drawing-room, to illustrate some stage effect. A young gentleman, full of eagerness, and with the best intentions, came over on tiptoe, and set down two lighted candles at Mr. Garrick's feet, to convey the idea of footlights. The actor was so much disconcerted, and annoyed, by this bit of *gaucherie*, that he abruptly sat down. This was too familiar a reminder. It was more cruel, when mean and malicious creatures of his own profession, full of envy at his social superiority, would take care to find out the date of these visits, and send on beforehand little dirty letters, or rather "covers," addressed

"*Mr. David Garrick, Player.*" This he felt acutely; it could not have the least effect with his host and hostess; but he knew they passed through the servants' hands *. The little world of the players had then more than its proportion of such unworthy devices and mean passions.

Yet he was not quite above the sensitiveness which may underlie friendship between a player and "a lord," and it was his nature to be morbidly quick to make a slight of any neglect coming from such a quarter. But Garrick's weaknesses were all on the surface, and it is really an interesting study to follow the little windings of his character. The best illustration of this was the little history of the invitation to Warwick Castle. He and his friend Arden took a jaunt together from Leicester to Lichfield, and from Lichfield settled to go over to Warwick Castle, on their way to Stratford, by special appointment. He had been invited, and "strongly pressed to pass a week *en famille*" at the castle, and thought he would now avail himself of the invitation. They arrived, were received by the owner, shown all the curiosities, treated to such light refreshment as a cup of chocolate, and then—bowed out like ordinary tourists. They were both bitterly indignant—Garrick especially, whom other lords were only too proud to entertain. The ludicrous part was Lord Warwick presenting him as he went away, with a newly printed "History of Greville and Brooke," which was considered a poor substitute for promised hospitality. Mr. Garrick turned some very sarcastic rhymes on the affair, which, like all the sarcastic

* Cradock.

rhymes of the time, were shown about and copied, and soon got into print. Some of the stanzas are good.

"He show'd them Guy's pot, but he gave them no soup,
No meat would his lordship allow,
Unless they had gnawed the blade bone of the Boar,
Or the rib of the famous Dun Cow."

He followed it up with an inscription to be placed over the gallery of the castle.

"When Neville, the stout Earl of Warwick liv'd here,
Three oxen for breakfast were slain,
And his friends were all welcome to sport and good cheer,
And invited again and again.

"His nerves are so weak, and his spirits so low,
This earl with no oxen does feed 'em,
And all of the former great doings we know,
He gives us a book, and we read 'em."

This is certainly undignified; but it must be recollected that these lines were merely written as a joke, for his own amusement and that of his friends. The worst was, that the whole was founded on a mistake, and the earl was perfectly unconscious of his offence, having sent some message which had not been delivered. The actor was dreadfully mortified by this reception; and we can guess the reason. He knew very well that the story would go about, and that there were plenty who would relish the notion of the "player" who aped fine company, receiving such "a snub." *

* Among his papers, I find half a dozen draughts of this squib. "Upon Lord W——k and Lady Louisa, his daughter's reception of me at W. Castle."

"My lord and lady thus receive you!
After so warm an invitation."

Or another shape was—"Upon Lord W. recommending the inn at Stratford."

"Your coach is quite ready, and so is your spouse;
And so *bon voyage*, Mr. Garrick!
At Stratford-on-Avon you'll find a good house,
Much better than any in Warwick."

HILL MSS.

Fond as he was of the company of persons of quality —and no one more dearly loved a lord—and always delighted to do them some of the little services that fell within the province of his profession, he never was inclined to sacrifice his independence in the smallest degree, "or play the toady." He was, in fact, ready with an honest self-assertion promptly to resent anything like patronage, or airs. As when Lord Essex "got up" private theatricals at Cassiobury, and had invited Lord North, Lords Sandwich and Coleraine, and other persons of distinction, Mr. Garrick was asked also, but apparently "through" Mr. Cradock, a guest, which was scarcely respectful, and rather treating him as "the player." He pleaded his heavy engagements at his own theatre, but did not conceal the real reason. "This filthy cold," he wrote, "I partly got by exhibiting my person in the gallant Hastings, the best compliment I could pay to the noble host and hostess, where you are; but, indeed, my pride was very much modified when I found the family did not come to their box until in the middle of the third act. It will not be long in my power to pay many such compliments." He had, in fact, given them a box, and at their request had actually fixed "Jane Shore" for the night. Lord Essex, however, asked a large dinner party, meaning to go after the dinner, and bring their guests. As might be expected, they did not reach the theatre until Garrick was nearly at his last speech. By the tone of his letter it would almost seem that no excuse had been made for this piece of ill-breeding. But this was altogether an exception to the generous and delicate way in which the great player was treated by his noble acquaintances.

One morning when Boswell had come to breakfast with Garrick, the host greeted him with, "Pray, now, did you—did you meet a little lawyer turning the corner, eh?" Then with an affected indifference, as if "standing on tiptoe," he explained that it was Lord Camden who had just left him, and with whom he had been taking a walk. Boswell very happily hit off this foolish bit of acting, and this weakness of wishing to be seen with the great. It scarcely deserved Johnson's severe comment that "Garrick was right, for Lord Camden *was* a little lawyer for associating so familiarly with. a player." That little lawyer and his family were among Garrick's kindest friends. The Chancellor's interest was used to advance friends of the actor, and exerted with a zeal and cordiality that made it doubly welcome. They interchanged verses. Garrick and his wife were often invited to Camden Place.* When the Chancellor was out of office, one of his consolations was laying out meetings with his friend. "I am happy enough . . . treat me then with an epigram, or a bit of prologue; or if you have nothing of that sort in readiness, assure me of your and Mrs. Garrick's health, and I will be content." He could write even more affectionately, when disappointed of a visit. "I had an inward feeling when we parted, that we should not meet again as we proposed, and this made me so desirous of keeping you when I had you. But now I despair. You and Mrs. Garrick are two rest-

* "The guitar," wrote Lord Camden, "the harpsichord, and the viol de gamba, are all new strung and tuned, and my boy was prepared to greet you with an excellent copy of humorous verses, which you shall now never see. The girls will break their instruments, and sing nothing but psalms for the next month."

less people, whose minds are always upon the stretch for conversation at home and abroad, and are strangers to the pleasures of one day's solitude. The only time you allot for thought, is eight to ten in the morning during the winter, and even these hours are interrupted by posts and boxkeepers. You see how fretful your letter has made me, but how can I be otherwise when I find myself deprived of a pleasure I have lived so long in hopes of." There was a warmth in this eagerness truly genuine; and it seemed as though Garrick's engagements were always fatally in the way. Not very long before the actor's death, he wrote to him, and it was more than a playful warning. "I was in expectation of meeting you last Sunday se'nnight at Mr. Dunning's, but you are too much in request to be had on short notice. *That idol popularity which has ruined my fortune and made yours*, will yet spoil your constitution; for perpetual feasting and riot will break you down at last, and you will be demolished, though you are stronger than Nuttall. I do very much, my dear Garrick, wish for a quiet day or two with you, when you are not interrupted every minute with authors and actors. Our noisy girls are gone, and the house is at peace." The friendship of such a man is a charming testimonial, and no better comment could be found on Johnson's foolish speech. That "familiarity" endured long; Camden was executor, and held the actor's pall, as the grave procession went up to Westminster Abbey. And yet that protest—a little fretful as it was—but too well described the actor's restless "fussiness," that "acting off the stage," which would not let him enjoy calmly the hearts and the friendship which were his, but kept him busy with little schemes and plots for

the next hour,—like the ladies of fashion, with many parties for the one night, and whose eyes and thoughts are on the one to which they have to go next, and not on the one where they are present.

Indeed, the number of influential men in office, who could be useful to him, and who were delighted to oblige him, was surprising. No man of his day had such influence. Some of his prettiest letters contain requests for some little service, and were hard to resist. As where some India chintz, a present to Mrs. Garrick, was detained by the Customs, he pleaded hard with Mr. Stanley in rhyme and prose.* How Mr. Pelham obliged him, we have seen: and, in Pelham's honour, he wrote that little ode, which attained a most surprising popularity, running through numerous editions, and two lines of which have been enrolled in the stock of "quotable" phrases.

> "Let others hail the rising sun,
> I bow to that whose course is run."

The men of ability and of intellect, formed a rich department of his acquaintance.

* "O Stanley, give ear to a husband's petition!" Passages in the letter have quite the turn of Elia's writing. He had done, he said, some trifling service for the Calcutta Theatre. "In return they have sent me Madeira, and poor Rachel the unfortunate chintz. She had set her young heart upon making some alterations in our little place at Hampton. *She concluded to show away* with her *prohibited* present. . . She had prepared chairs, &c., *for this familiar token of Indian gratitude.*" . . . Now it had fallen into "the coarse hands of *filthy dungeon ruffians.*"—HILL MSS.

CHAPTER V.

FRIENDS AND ACQUAINTANCES.

1759.

THE range of Garrick's acquaintance included the most motley class, from the meanest, shirtless Grub Street poet to the highest duke in the land. In it were noble lords and ladies, bishops, parsons, lawyers, authors, adventurers—gentle natures, rough and savage characters; for all, his calm and placid temper had a sort of charm. He was fortunate in the friendship of Warburton, and it is surprising to see with what warmth and gentleness that rude and turbulent nature could deal with a character so unlike his own. At one time, Mr. Garrick had heard of a small estate which was close to Bath, and was actually thinking of buying it. This was suggested by Warburton, with a sincere regard for his interest. "Hark you, my friend," he said, "do not your frequent indispositions say—whatever your doctors may think fit to do—*lusisti satis?* Is it *tanti* to kill yourself, in order to leave a vast deal of money to your heirs?" This was just after the Festival riot,—when he was thinking of the fickleness of the public, and casting about for some pleasant retreat not too far from town. The Bishop could give him this fine compliment:—"I honour you for your repeated endeavours in stemming a torrent of vice and folly. You do it in a station where most men, I suppose, would

think you might fairly be dispensed with, from bearing your part in the duty of good citizens, on such a necessary occasion. *Nobody but you and Pope ever knew how to preserve the dignity* of your respective employments."

To tempt him further, he drew a graceful picture: "We have the village every moment in our view, and it is about a measured mile from Bath, on an easy ascent. The lands of the estate of Weston run down to the banks of the Avon. There is a manor house on the west side of the village, and higher than it; it is old and large, but neither very good nor commodious . . . . . not well situate for the prospect; but amends might be made for that by a pleasure building at a very little distance. The village is pretty, and has a clear brook running quite through the middle of it. The estate is bare of wood; so that you would have amusement enough, like Mr. Allen (and a very delightful and profitable one it is), in planting. There is excellent riding on the Down, or top of the mountain which hangs over it called Landsdown; and below, for the length of six or eight miles towards Bristol, you may have as agreeable excursions by water, as the finest wooded vale, and a clear winding river can afford—the fashionable summer diversion of the dissipated guests of Bath."

In stormy contest all his life with every one, he remained at peace with the actor to the end. To Warburton was introduced the new Yorkshire Rabelais: Laurence Sterne, who had come up to town in 1761, to enjoy the honours of his book. Indeed nothing is more remarkable in Garrick's life than the nice proportion of his acts of friendship, delicately shaped so

as to be of the highest profit for the occasion. With a storm rising about Sterne, and cries of scandal ringing in his ears, the actor secured for him the useful patronage, and protection, of two bishops, and when these were being alienated by the clergyman's own folly, made unwearied exertions to excuse and restore him. All that round of feasting and honour, which makes Sterne's London campaign read like a romance, he owed to Garrick, who was unwearied in introducing him everywhere. "Mr. Garrick," wrote Tristram in a tumult of delight to his "Kitty," "pays me all and more honour than I could look for. I dined with him to-day, and he has promised numbers of great people to carry me to dine wth 'em. He has given me an order for the liberty of his boxes . . . . and indeed leaves nothing undone that can do me either service or credit; he has undertaken the management of the booksellers, and will procure me a great price." * The sentimental clergyman, it would seem, was not a little affected by the charms of Mrs. Garrick; and often sent a rapturous message of admiration, through her husband. Garrick helped him with a loan,—wrote from abroad that it should be looked after; but he added that they were not to be in the least ungentle with him. Shandy's incurable lightness, and that round of follies—follies which were of the head, not of the heart—seemed to have alienated this good friend, as they did so many others; and Garrick was at the dinner party in Clifford Street, when the footman came in with news that he had just seen the

* From the curious little collection of Sterne's love letters in the Philobiblion collection.

miserable Yorick breathe his last, without a friend near him.*

Another nobleman, the Duke of Devonshire, was his friend, and came often to Hampton. To him Garrick could apply for a loan. The answer was, "I have sent you a note on Snow for 500*l.*: if you wanted as much more it is at your service. I am very glad it is in my power to be of any convenience to you. *I will have no security.*" No wonder he felt acutely when news reached him of the death of this friend.

After thirty years, the Mr. Lyttleton who had been introduced to him during the Goodman's Fields' days, now become Lord Lyttleton, was still his warmest friend. In *that* noble person there was no fickleness. With him Mrs. Garrick was "Pid-pad."† Though the house was full of Grenvilles, and "Burzinsky and Paoli had just gone, and Belgioso and the Russians were to come next week," still "all parties of pleasure without Garrick and Pid-pad appear dull and insipid." Mrs. Montagu desired all sorts of "fine things" to be said to Mr. Garrick for her, but Lord Lyttleton would only tell him one plain truth, "that we both love you dearly." Even the great political Cato of the day, now in retirement, thawed into something like warmth and gaiety. Down at Mount Edgecombe Mr. Garrick had turned some verses in the statesman's honour. They were not in his happiest strain, likening the elderly, hypochondriac ex-premier, who was racked

* Sterne's death-bed is a ghastly scene. The incidents—the hireling, who it is said was robbing him of his sleeve-links as he died, the footman looking on—the blank desertion—the coldness of death, that began with his feet and went upwards—the whole would make a fine subject for a painter, and a fearful contrast to that of the gay clergyman coquetting with the grisette in Newton's delightful painting.

† A joke on her pronunciation of "pit-a-pat."

with gout and rheumatism, to Achilles, "Peleus's son," when he, "wrathful forsook the hostile field" and took up the lyre; and thus described how the earl, freed from cares of state, solaced himself at Burton Pynsent:—

"Cheerful he came, all blithe and gay,
Fair blooming like the son of May;
Adown his radiant shoulders hung
A harp by all the Muses strung."

In return for this absurd compliment, the Earl sent some verses in reply, containing a pressing invitation, and which, it must be said, are infinitely more free and natural than the actor's.

"Leave, Garrick, the rich landscape, proudly gay,
Docks, forts, and navies, brightening all the bay;
To my plain roof repair, primeval seat!
* * * *
Come, then, immortal spirit of the stage,
Great nature's proxy, glass of every age!
Come, taste the simple life of patriarchs of old,
Who, rich in rural peace, ne'er thought of pomp or gold."

He was charmed with the verses from Mount Edgecombe. "You have kindly," he said, "settled on me a lasting species of property I never dreamed of, in that enchanting place,—a far more able conveyancer than any in Chanceryland; for instead of laboriously perplexing rights, you, by a few happy lines, at once both create the title and fix the possession." On a rare occasion Mr. Pitt and Lady Hester would visit the theatre, and, as it were, command a play, through Mr. Berenger. They were enchanted. They thanked their friend heartily for "his obliging good offices" with Garrick. "Inimitable Shakspeare! but more matchless Garrick! Always deep in nature as the poet, but never (what the poet is too often) out of it." This compliment was endorsed by Garrick

with delight: "A note from Mr. Pitt to Berenger about ME having at his request acted *Macbeth*. Rich and exquisite flattery!" Yet it is characteristic of Pitt's stateliness, that he always seemed to deal with Garrick by embassy, as it were, and would make arrangements for coming to the theatre through other persons. Yet, considering that "Mr. Pitt" was one of the audience in the old glorious Goodman's Fields' days, the actor might have counted on a little more freedom and graciousness.

Burke's affection for him was indeed evident. "You little Horace," he wrote, "you *lepidissime Homuncio*, when will you call to see your Mæcenas *atavis?*" Then he would grumble playfully at Garrick's neglect. "You know the unfortunate have always proud stomachs." "I send you," he wrote, "a late turtle, a *rosa sera*, as good for the palate as the other for the nose. Your true epicureans are of opinion, you know, that it contains in itself all kinds of flesh, fish, and fowl. It is, therefore, a dish fit for one who can represent all the solidity of flesh, the volatility of fowl, and the oddity of fish." Wilkes, too, wrote him lively, rattling letters of compliment. They had met in Paris; and from Paris "Jack Cade" would write over amusing French news,—how Helvetius, their common friend, had sent him a note this morning, beginning, "Mon cher Wilkes—You, who will be exiled in this world, and damned for ever in the next, and to whom posterity will set up a statue, &c." He would write him exaggerated compliments. Yet he was no friend; and after the actor's death spoke of him harshly and unkindly.

A little sketch, of that old intriguer—now near the end of his course—but who, from contact with our

actor, seems to have laid down his stratagems, and to have become a genial, simple nature. Garrick sent him a useful present, "one of the most valuable presents which an old man can receive, or a good friend can make, of a delightful horse to supply the defects of old age and infirmity." He was eager to see him at Claremont, but, characteristically, presently glided into the old platitudes, and trusted his friend would give the public "such representations of human nature as must encourage, and promote, the love of virtue and virtuous actions." Beside this, we can put the portrait of the man who overcame the old duke, Lord Bute. Garrick must have been much taken back by the ungraciousness with which that cold favourite received a present of some new little composition. Lord Bute said he was much obliged; but was too jealous for his country's honour not to wish that this had been Mr. Garrick's first attempt at writing. He believed it to be below Mr. Garrick's talents. Silence in such a matter might be taken ill. It is scarcely so wonderful that this nobleman was unpopular; and we may fancy Garrick's untoward air—he who was accustomed to praise "in pailfuls"—at such unusual candour.

With Walpole, a neighbour almost, he never seemed to get on well. It was hard, indeed, to be on terms with the agreeable letter writer, who was precisely the character to resent the notion of a mere actor being put on a level with "gentlemen of condition." It would seem that the vicinity of the handsome villa at Hampton, whence the player and his wife drove up to town in their "coach-and-four," and with whom lords and dukes came to dine, excited his jealousy. When Garrick went abroad, a letter was sent off to

Sir Horace Mann, to warn him to be on his guard. The way he spoke of Garrick was always offensive. He would not put his new play on the stage, as he would not expose himself to "the impertinences of that jackanapes Garrick, who lets nothing appear but his own wretched stuff, or that of creatures still duller." No one enjoyed the success of Powell so much. "You may keep Garrick in Paris," he wrote with delight. And when Garrick, after three years' suspense of intercourse, came to see him, Walpole wrote to his friends that Mr. Garrick was saying everywhere he was so happy at their reconciliation. "I did not know we had quarrelled," adds Mr. Walpole. Yet he should have recollected one kind office, when Garrick had tried to avert the anger of Warburton. Walpole had just published the "Anecdotes of Painting," where the enraged bishop found his name coupled with "Tom Hearne and Browne Willis." He was in a fury at this insult, and told Garrick "he would be about Walpole's pots" for that treatment. "I mean," he added, "the gallypots and washes of his toilette. I know he has a fribbled tutor at his elbow as sicklied over with affectation as himself. But these half men are half wits," &c. Garrick knew well what all this portended, and that this mild phrase of "being about his pots" meant the frantic destruction of a bull in a china shop. He hastened to get Walpole to explain or soften. Another bishop was sent to tell him, that Walpole never intended to make allusion to *him*—in fact, Mr. Walpole gave his word of honour that he did not. This embassy Warburton considered mere impertinent interference, "for I never had that familiarity of acquaintance with him to expect he should

busy himself in my concerns." He must have farther satisfaction than Mr. Walpole's honour. This arrogance is quite characteristic. He dubbed the ambassador "Bishop Wormius" as being an antiquarian. "But enough of them, whether they be such, who are so, in jest or earnest. I am right served for being found in his atmosphere."

What Walpole thought of Garrick's playing, how unfair and prejudiced he was in every judgment of the actor and of his plays, was notorious, and will be shown later. He always had a sneer for the actor.

Charles Yorke, the brilliant member of a brilliant family, a most engaging character, was an intimate friend. His shifts and tergiversations—like those of Charles Townshend—were the shifts of genius, disgusted with the stupidity of the allies to which it had joined itself. He, with a surprising cordiality, would give his friend legal opinions on some little theatrical difficulty, in a pleasant, untechnical way. He knew also that other Charles—Townshend, very well; and that lively statesman was eager to come to the theatre, but characteristically often forgot, or mistook, the night.* The Dukes of Portland, Richmond, and Bedford, Lords Palmerston, Edgecumbe, Shelburne, North, Villiers, Rockingham—half the ranks of the titled aristocracy—were his friends or acquaintances. All were pressing him to their houses and castles. Lord Camden, as we have seen, lamented these flattering attentions, and near the end of his own life told his friend that he could find no pleasure in the "trash" that then made up the nobility. To the Player the

* He promised Garrick a subscription for the Calas family, and had to be "dunned" ineffectually for it.

tone of address adopted by this "trash" is of the most delicate and friendly sort—deferential even at times. In so honouring him, they did themselves honour; and without laying undue weight on the value of such patronage, it is a most singular spectacle to think of "a mere player" thus sought, and courted, and petted by the noblest and greatest in the country—by the highest in intellect, in politics, in rank, and in fashion. Well might he be proud of such homage; for no player, before or since, has enjoyed such distinction. Foote was found at a great house or two—at the Delavals, and others. In his case, they descended to him, and did not raise him to a level with themselves.

It is scarcely surprising that such attentions should have flattered him, or given him a growing taste for yet more of the same kind. But it is even more surprising that he was not overset with pride or conceit. The most that could be detected, was his introducing the names of lords, a little too often, which his really numerous engagements to such persons might render unavoidable. In his *conduct* there was no change. He was not "fine," nor inclined to pass by humbler friends. His little affectations were harmless, though sometimes not a little amusing. As when he gave a festival at Hampton, and had Torre, the foreign pyrotechnist, to show his skill, every one read a paragraph in the papers, and which there can be no doubt was written by himself—"The entertainment on Friday last," said the "Public Advertiser" of August, 1774, "at the house of Mr. Garrick at Hampton, was not intended as a festival, or *fête champêtre*, but merely to amuse a few of the neighbouring ladies and gentlemen." It describes the satisfaction it gave,

and the anxiety of the crowd, "so that every person of the least decent appearance was admitted." Music was given, and afterwards from boats M. Torre displayed his skill in girandole, then new to the English public. "They were over by ten, when the company returned to the house and gardens till they *could conveniently procure their carriages.* There was a dinner and supper for *some select people*, and various refreshments for the rest. *The Dukes of G. and C. were not there. The signal for the beginning of the fireworks was made by His Grace the Duke of N.*" This is really amusing: but such little vanities are excusable, when balanced by such real virtues.

No man ever had such a curious parti-coloured roll of acquaintance, which included all classes and conditions. It must have seemed to him like the interior of his own great theatre, with its classes of boxes, pit, and galleries. He knew the lowest and the highest, the odd and the eccentric, the happy and the miserable. Dr. Dodd, with whom the title of "the unfortunate divine" was always associated, was one of these unlucky friends. He was assiduous in his civilities. The two glimpses we have of this clergyman show him to us, curiously enough, in relation with the family who brought him to the scaffold. Once he gave a play at his house, in which his pupil, Mr. Stanhope, took a part, and Mr. Garrick furnished a prologue, full of compliments to the Lord Chesterfield, who was present.* Later, Dr. Dodd wrote from "Turret House," saying, he is charged by Lord and Lady Chesterfield "to request the honour of Mr. and Mrs.

* The prologue touched a little awkwardly on the infirmities of the Earl, lamenting his deafness.

Garrick's company at dinner at Blackheath, and that Mrs. Dodd and Mr. Stanhope will be of the party, and attend him, and he hopes Mr. G. will not refuse him the satisfaction of taking a piece of mutton at Ealing." *

Boswell was sure not to neglect so important a centre of social pleasure. A passage from a letter written to Garrick not long after the Jubilee is admirable. "It is true we must all look forward to the last scene. You, who have so often felt, and made others feel its solemnity, *must fall, just like others.* This puts me in mind of three essays which I wrote on the profession of a player last year, and which were published in the 'London Magazine,' in which I have some concern. Pray, have you read them? . . . . Why have you not called on General Paoli, since I had the pleasure of presenting you to him, in your morning dress, *comme un roi déguisé*, and he paid you so handsome a compliment, which, I dare say, you have added to your cabinet of jewels." He likened the letter of Garrick that reached him on his tour, to a pine-apple. Indeed, his testimony on the whole, to the actor's merit, is very friendly. But there is a little scene reported, and which is but very little known, which shows him very characteristically in his convivial moments. At a Guildhall dinner, when Mr. Pitt was present, with Sir Joshua and other celebrities, Mr. Boswell contrived to be asked to sing; then, standing up, he delivered a short speech referring to himself, in which he said that he had had the good fortune to be introduced to most of the crowned heads and distinguished characters of Europe, but with all his exertions had never attained the

* Endorsed by Garrick, "Dr. Dodd hanged."—*Bullock, MSS.*

happiness of being presented to a gentleman, who was an honour to his country, and whose talents he held in the highest esteem. All the company understood the allusion, but Mr. Pitt remained perfectly cold and impassive. Then Mr. Boswell gave his song, which was a sort of parody on Dibdin's "Sweet little Cherub," and called "A Grocer of London." The minister was a member of the Grocers' Guild, and this absurdity was in his honour. So far this was ludicrous enough, but Boswell, half volunteering and half pressed by the company, and no doubt much affected by the wine, sang this song over no less than six times; until Mr. Pitt's muscles at last relaxed, and he was obliged to join in the general roar. Mr. Taylor, who was present, walked home with the author of the song, and recollected that they roared "Grocer of London" all through the streets. Boswell was also at Wilkes' mayoralty dinner, very busy, and got a place for Colman beside himself, with great pride. He stopped the waiters, and called to one in German, which made Colman give him a smart thrust,—"This must be St. James's, as we hear nothing but Scotch and German."

It was natural that such a disciple of Shakespeare should have come in contact with the whole corps of Shakespeare editors — Steevens, Capell, Warburton, and many more—who abused each other to him, with all the ferocity that seemed incident to their calling. Warburton said to him, "Of all idiots, sure the greatest is one Capell." Steevens, speaking of the same person, admitted his exactness, but protested, "that if a flea were to break his chain, he would be utterly incapable of mending it." Warburton had a true contempt for Johnson's labour. Steevens had a full and forcible

style; his letters are exceedingly vigorous.* But it was through Steevens, that Garrick saw how faithless and ungrateful a friend could be. All the choicest treasures of his libraries—his scarce, handsome, richly bound old plays were lent to Steevens and kept by him for years. For years, the friendliest and most confidential intercourse existed between them. When the Jubilee was the talk, and, perhaps, jest of every one, a number of bitter and amusing squibs were noticed in the papers, which attracted much attention. Some were attributed to Foote. Inquiry was made, and Garrick was shocked to discover, that the most savage and bitter on himself, were written by the man who was at that moment on the most confidential terms with him. When Steevens heard that Garrick was about taking the matter up seriously, he grew alarmed, and sent to assure him that he was author of three only of the most harmless—a parody on Dryden's Ode, which he called an ode on the Duke of Bedford dedicating a temple to the memory of his cook, Le Stue, and of two others. Yet, almost immediately, he was boasting everywhere that he had written all the offensive pieces—some thirty-five or forty—and added, that it was "*fun to vex Garrick.*" Fun to vex Garrick! This was every one's excuse, and Garrick's destiny; his gentle, forgiving, and too indifferent nature, was a mark for the spite and satire of such writers. This treachery he took calmly, and broke off this acquaintance.† But the editor contrived to pacify him.

* "A rival editor, like myself, will always become a kind of Town Bull; and every fatherless letter calved in the newspapers on this subject will, of course, be laid to his charge."

† The character of Steevens must have been truly odious. Davies men-

It must have been delightful to see him in his fits of boisterous spirits, as when he was hurrying to pay a visit to his friend Burney through St. Martin's Street, where the little boys, who swarmed from the lanes and corners, stared at him and gathered round, for they knew him perfectly, and formed his gallery audience. He would find his friend in the midst of his family, and under the hairdresser's hands. Such a scene has been preserved.* He was in more than ordinary spirits, and began by affecting to watch the hairdresser's operations with the most absorbing interest and wonder. The artist seemed delighted at this compliment. Then the wonderful face began to take a sort of compound expression of meanness and sadness, like *Abel Drugger*'s, with such a hopeless vacancy, that the hairdresser grew quite disturbed and confused. And when Garrick, taking off his "scratch" wig, asked him, with the same stupid manner, "Could you touch up this old Bob a bit now?" the other became quite scared at the metamorphosis, and ran out of the room. He was not so successful with a red-headed Yorkshire assistant in Roubiliac's studio, where he had gone to see how the Shakespeare statue was getting on. He seized a rule, and knitting his brows, and making his fine eyes roll, came over fiercely to the man. He was infinitely discomposed when the latter said, coolly, "Now, my little master, what tricks are you up to now?"

Put into yet greater spirits by success, the visitor asked how the doctor's pamphlet was selling, and

tions a story of his throwing libels over his neighbour's garden wall. Other stories of a very malignant sort are to be found in Taylor, vol. ii. p. 46.

* By Miss Hawkins.

then burst into the tone and manner of an auctioneer,—"A penny a piece! A penny! All agoing! Each worth a pound, ladies and gentlemen!" Then he said the doctor sat in that easy chair "to rest his understanding." From all the young people round, came a cry of "Oh!" "Oh!" Garrick, quite grave and concerned, started up, "You mistake, I assure you. O really, 'pon my word, I never—that—intended—I only meant—" with the most absurd alarm. He was inexhaustible that morning. He was engaged to breakfast with Boswell, and in a moment was taking him off to the life. Going away after this amusing visit, he had his jest even with the housemaid on the stairs. He addressed her solemnly—"Child, do you know who I am? I am one of the greatest geniuses of the age!" And left her, scared and mystified. This little scene, even allowing for over-colouring, is a fair specimen of his social manners, and speaks a light heart and amiable temper.

He was fond of giving Johnson—not ill-naturedly. The great doctor was indeed a tempting subject for mimicry, and Garrick could give a fine Hogarthian sketch—broad and humorous. It was delightful to see him, heaving up his shoulders, working his arms, looking round the table preparing to compound a bowl, and asking, "Who's for poonch?" He would declaim the first four lines of Gray's Bard, in the doctor's solemn and sonorous declamation, rolling out the lines so that scarcely a word was intelligible. The pompous and persevering Cradock declared one night, in a mixed company, that he could do it better without pronouncing *any* words, or articulating *at all.* "Tom

Davies" was considered to take off the doctor's rhinoceros-laugh, with good success.*

To Hampton came the strange Monsey—one of the oddities of London, whose style of wit may be understood, from his declining a nobleman's invitation to dinner on this ground—"I can't, my lord, for I have a scoundrel to dine with me." "Then bring your scoundrel," said his lordship, as promptly. Both excuse and reply were given in the hearing of the invited guest. Garrick became acquainted with him at an Old Bailey trial, when he heard a gentleman ask a person in front to move a little. The other, a stout fellow, kept his place. At last the gentleman said half aloud—"If I were not a coward, I would give you a blow even in open court." The oddity of this speech highly delighted Garrick, who determined to know him; and was still more delighted when he found out that he was the well-known Monsey, whom he had never yet seen. The result was an intimacy of many years. Garrick often took him down to Hampton. Once, he rode in early, leaving Mrs. Garrick and the Doctor to follow in the carriage. She had not her husband's toleration for the Doctor's humour, which was indeed not to be expected in one of

* Cradock's little vanity—quite upon his sleeve—is delightful. "I MUST SAY," he writes in large capitals, "GARRICK SPOKE WITH GREAT SATISFACTION OF MY ACTING." Some private theatricals were to be got up at Kingsgate, Lord Holland's seat; and "The Clandestine Marriage," and "Hamlet," were fixed upon in the plays. In the visit, Mr. Cradock was to play *three* characters, "that '(in capitals also)' GARRICK MIGHT HAVE SOME ONE TO DEPEND UPON." Garrick was also "*to play as the Ghost to my Hamlet.*". This pleasant programme was upset by the burning down of Lord Holland's house. At one time a performance was proposed to be got up at Lichfield, in honour of Garrick and Johnson; and Mr. Cradock was to play *Archer*, Goldsmith offered to take *Scrub*; but Yates officiously offered to do the part, and, of course, the poet was thrust aside.

her elegant manners, and foreign accomplishments. On their way in, the Doctor corrected her in the pronunciation of an English word, which resulted in a quarrel, and the Doctor was on the point of stopping the coach to jump out. At dinner, in Southampton Street, Garrick noticed that neither spoke to each other, and said gaily—"Hey-day, what! have you two lovers fallen out?" Monsey then told the story, and Garrick, out of pure mischief, took his side, was vastly amused at Mrs. Garrick's claim to speak English so well, that no one could take her for a foreigner, and then told the story of "Potty Brice:" how Mrs. Garrick had gone to an auction-room to buy damaged linens, and when asked her name, meant to give her maid's, Betty Price, but instead, said "Potty Brice." Between the actor and Doctor, a tone of blunt familiarity was studiously cultivated. The plainest and rudest truths were spoken in the most open way.* Thus at a dinner-party at Southampton Street, the guests were Warburton and Brown, the author of "Barbarossa," at first and for a time a sort of toady and client of the Bishop's, and Monsey. Garrick bade the Doctor restrain himself, because he was in presence of Dr. Warburton. "O yes," said Dr. Brown, more obsequious, it is said, than even the obsequious Hurd—"of course he will, for he is afraid of Dr.

* Monsey heard that Garrick was having the Duke of Argyll and some ladies of quality to dinner, and reproached him for not asking him. Garrick told him plainly he was not fit company for such persons. "You are too great a blackguard." "Why, you little scoundrel," said the other, "ask Lord Godolphin if I can't behave myself?" The Doctor came. Mrs. Garrick was so busy helping the persons of quality, that she passed over Dr. Monsey, who had several times put out his plate. At last he called out, "*Will* you help me, you b—h, or not?" Garrick fell back, nearly suffocated with laughter; the Duke stared; the rest of the company were struck with consternation.

Warburton." Monsey waited a moment to see what Warburton would say, and then answered, gravely,—"No, sir. I am neither afraid of Dr. Warburton *nor of his jack-pudding.*" This thrust, however happy, produced a solemn pause, and very soon broke up the party. The Doctor, too, was once made the object of one of those theatrical *tours de force* for which Garrick has made himself a distinct reputation. He was found by the Doctor, ill in bed, on a night when he should have been at the theatre to play *King Lear.* Garrick said it was no great matter, as there was an actor there, Marr, so like him in voice, manner, and look, that the audience would not find out the difference. As soon as Monsey was gone to the theatre, Garrick leaped up, drove away, and arrived just in time to come on. The Doctor listened, wondering; at last saw that the audience believed in the identity, and then began to suspect the trick. He hurried back to Southampton Street; but Garrick was already home before him, lying covered up in his bed, having actually not had time to get off his kingly dress. It often happens that this gross humour and eccentricity is "ill-conditioned" and malignant, and Garrick soon discovered that this friend was sending about ill-natured stories of him, and then the Doctor became his enemy.

No one could tell a "good story" so dramatically, and he was very fond of practical joking—as it was a sort of useful, unprofessional training, and gave him a freedom he would not have on the stage. These were of an informal character, and he was particularly effective in describing, with characteristic mimicry, some that he had witnessed himself among the people. A

little scene, outside of a public-house at Kensington gravel-pits, where a man had undertaken to eat a large quantity of bacon and beans, was one of his most effective stories. An enormous crowd was gathered, who grew impatient as the man did not appear, but who at last came forward without his coat, "his shirt-sleeves tied with red ribbons," and a large lump of bacon with the beans, on his knees. He was "well received," and began to eat with alacrity, but gradually slackened, and finally ran in, and escaped. The mob then grew riotous, and wrecked the house. Garrick's animated picture of the whole scene—the cries of the mob, "Beans and bacon!" to bring out the man, and his vivid picture of the confusion, made up a most diverting story, and convulsed all his hearers.*

In his company, Garrick often indulged in these tricks; as when walking with him and Colonel Wyndham up Ludgate Hill, he went out in the middle of the road and stared at the sky, repeating, "I never saw two before!" A crowd, of course, gathered, some wise one saying, "It must be two storks, as these birds are never seen in company." Garrick's wild stare of lunacy as it rested on them, quite scared all. So when some boys were coming out of school, Garrick picked out one, whom he sternly reprimanded for ill-treating his companion. The supposed sufferer said it was untrue; but Garrick only spoke with greater severity to the culprit, saying how little he deserved the generosity of the boy, *who sought to excuse him by a falsehood.* The hopeless mystification and alarm even, of the boys, the stupid

* Taylor.

terror of the boy himself, who, under Garrick's eye, began to question whether he had not done what he was accused of, was a picture. Garrick justified himself by saying, he got valuable lessons in experience. So would he turn round, and give a piercing look at a ticket porter, who was going along cheerily, and humming a tune. The fellow's gaiety was checked at once; Garrick would stop, and again look round at him. The restlessness of the man, and even his distress, the suspicions of the passers, who began to look at him also, became extremely dramatic. So his calling to a smart young waterman on the river, "Are you not ashamed to be dressed in that way, with your mother in such distress, and you *allowing her only threepence a week?*" A stone, however, was the reply to this jest, and Garrick's boat had to pull hard to get out of reach.*

He often was induced to get up after dinner and give what he called "his rounds," and, leaning on the back of a chair, would pass from an imitation of madness to that of drunkenness, and change his face with marvellous versatility. This must have been a high entertainment.

That weak creature, Percival Stockdale, in miserable health, and like Churchill—having stripped off his gown "because it had sickened my soul with such a nausea," now came to fling himself abjectly at Garrick's feet, with compliments and even adulation, imploring him to save him, and keep him on firm ground. This saviour was "one of those superior beings destined by God to save the miserable and

* The reader will recall Johnson's "slanging" another waterman on the river—perhaps the most masterly specimen of 'blackguarding" on record.

weak. . . ." He was glad that the application for a chaplaincy had failed, "for you yet think and pine for my good." All he wished Mr. Garrick to procure for him, was "a creditable and permanent office, in which drudgery should not be required." "The metropolis yet *strongly attracts me.*" And he hinted to his friend that unless his feet were thus kept on firm ground, he must drive down the precipice of ruin. Garrick of course listened to his appeal. He used all his interest with Lord Sandwich, and obtained for him the chaplaincy of the *Resolution*, then lying at Portsmouth. He had him to stop for weeks at Hamp-ton, brought him to his friend Fitzmaurice, where this strange being, as he was walking with Mrs. Garrick in a wood, requested permission to cut the initials of his name deeply, on the same tree beside hers.

He was only tolerably content with his chaplaincy, —was afraid he would again be unsatisfied with himself, or unable to act "with that tempered vivacity which greatly contributes to make a man agreeable." The captain and lieutenants were polite and attentive, and if he were only at peace with himself, he could be almost happy. Then was to come a specimen of that queer side of human character, with which Garrick was often favoured. This desponding, languishing clergyman was busy with poems, and had "forced" himself to sit down to a sort of philosophical drama, which his kind friend had suggested. In a day or so, he had turned a sort of jovial song, which he hoped to have set by Mr. Dibdin, or perhaps might have the honour of being sung at Drury Lane. This did not promise well.

Stockdale, indeed, is *impayable* in every view. His

Skimpole mind gives one more proof of the deep knowledge of human character in our great novelist. When every means of procrastination was exhausted, and the *Resolution* was ordered to sea, he told Garrick he was determined to die, rather than be sacrificed "to this horrible life." Garrick must get him something else. "*Verify my eulogium of your being as great in Garrick as in Lear.* It will give great pleasure to your own moral sentiments . . . . . *It is impossible for me to point out what I want you to do for me.* You know my cast of mind—*you know the range I formerly gave you!*" In a few months he seems to have lost his chaplaincy. He had once admired, idolised Mr. Garrick. "With philosophic calmness" he imputed Garrick's severity to error, "but to error *which hath sunk me for ever.*"

However, he consoled himself with poetry—"Verses to a Linnet," &c., and an indiscreet poem called "The Poet." Though Garrick disapproved of its publication strongly, the author discovered, accidentally, that Garrick had been drawing attention to it by friendly puffs in various newspapers. The worthless fellow later came to write some memoirs, and there, held up the failings of the man who had been his friend, and "saviour," and could dwell on his "envy" and his "jealousy!" It is almost sickening to see what vile patterns of human nature Garrick was to know.

The sensitiveness of his many debtors almost makes us smile. One might think that to lend money was the sorest injury one man could do to another. There was a pleasant Irishman, who was Master of the Horse to the Lord-Lieutenant, and who had got into embar-

rassment. Garrick had voluntarily offered his assistance; and when he was going abroad for some years, and settling his affairs, proposed some shape of formal security. This was indignantly resented by the sensitive Master of the Horse, as he frankly admitted, "from the consciousness of my own inability to discharge so considerable a debt if the power of demanding it fell into any other hands but your own." The result was a rather natural coolness. On Garrick's return, Mr. Jephson determined to make some amende. He said that he saw his fault. He had, in fact, been writing a play.

It is almost amusing to read the flourish with which he comes forward. He owned that he had been wrong, but was determined "to do *all* that *now* remains for my satisfaction and your own." Which was not to pay the money he owed, but "to acknowledge myself under the greatest obligations to you, and to assure you, if you now please to accept my bond, or other instrument, for the money, *it will in no degree lessen the sense of the great service* your kindness," &c. Garrick, with that charming sweetness which always distinguished him, only said, "The more I think of this matter, the less I am able to account for your particular diffidence. I wish your next friend may be as much more able to serve you, as more deserving of your confidence; and I wish that I could not think that you have withheld the only proof you could give me, that this confidence was mutual." He then reassured Jephson, by telling him that he had protected him, as to the bond, in his will. The Master of the Horse, after all, was a good fellow; and this was what Johnson might have called "the

sensitiveness of impecuniosity." Many of his plays were afterwards brought out by the same friend.

Baretti had done him some little offices. The remedy of Count Bujowich for sciatica, which he had recommended for Mrs. Garrick, and the success of which was "miraculous," was never forgotten. Garrick repaid him with loans, and every kind of good office. When Baretti was apprehended for murder,—for killing a man in a street scuffle,—Garrick attended with other friends at Lord Mansfield's, to give bail. The scene at the trial, reads itself, like a scene out of a comedy of the day, and characteristically brought on all the actors, in their various parts.*

Among the familiar attractions of Hampton must be counted the dogs, and Mr. Garrick's great dog, "Dragon," well known everywhere. He had travelled up to town, and, like his master, had made his appearance on the stage at Drury Lane—being led out by

* Garrick was greatly annoyed by Lord Mansfield's behaviour, who, to show his knowledge, affected to discuss the meaning of a passage in "Othello" while the bonds were being signed. I shall be pardoned for quoting the later scene from the Sessions Papers. The "Honourable Mr. Beauclerk" was called first, and we seem to hear the man of fashion and *élégant*. "He gave me letters to *some of the first people abroad*. I went to Italy *the time the Duke of York did*. Unless Mr. Baretti had been a man of consequence, he could not have recommended me to such people as he did. He is a *gentleman* of letters." Mr. Croker has quoted Dr. Johnson's testimony in the witness-box. "He is a man of literature—a very studious man—a man of diligence. A man that I never knew to be otherwise than peaceable, and a man that I take to be rather timorous." Garrick was then called: "I never knew a man of more active benevolence. At Paris I was very inquisitive about men of literature, and asked who was the best writer of French; they told me Baretti. I have a very particular instance of his great friendship. Mrs. Garrick got a lameness, and we tried every remedy." Baretti recommended one. A knife was put into his hand. "*Mrs. Garrick has one now*, with a steel blade and a gold back." This introduction of Mrs. Garrick is quite like the manager. Goldsmith gave his testimony with a generous warmth. "He is a most humane, benevolent, and peaceable man. I have heard him speak with regard to those poor creatures on the street. He is a man of as *great humanity as any in the world*."

the droll Weston, who spoke an epilogue, addressed to him. The audience were infinitely delighted with the unconscious acting of the large creature, who seemed quite at home in their presence, and was looking up with great good humour into the face of the droll actor, who was addressing him. There was near being a riot on a succeeding night when the epilogue was withdrawn, and the dog had to be sent for. This familiarity was scarcely consistent with the dignity of Drury Lane, and seemed nearly as bad as that boxing of Hunt and dancing of Mahomet, which he had once denounced so scornfully. Later Miss Hannah More addressed this dog, elegantly and appropriately; and her very pleasing ode to Dragon was copied and recopied, and had at last to be printed to gratify admirers.

"O Dragon! change with me thy fate,
To me give up thy place and state,
And I will give thee mine.
I left to think, and thou to feed,
My mind enlarged, thy body freed,
How blest thy lot and mine.

"I'd get my master's way—by rote,
Ne'er would I bark at ragged coat,
Nor tear the tattered sinner.
Like him I'd love the dog of merit,
Caress the cur of broken spirit,
And give them all a dinner.

"Nor let me pair his blue-eyed dame
With Venus or Minerva's name,
One warrior, one coquette:
No; Pallas or the Queen of Beauty
Shunn'd or betray'd that nuptial duty,
Which *she* so highly set.

"Whene'er I heard the rattling coach
Proclaim the long-desired approach,
How would I haste to greet 'em?
Nor ever feel I wore a chain,
Till starting, I perceived with pain,
I could not fly to meet 'em."

Thus, like nearly every other man of heart and feeling, dogs he both loved and respected; and there were always many seen about Hampton.

Such is a glimpse of the private life of a pleasant man, and such was the curious "bundle of sticks," smooth, strong and supporting, *crooked* and useless, which made up Garrick's friends and acquaintances. A volume could be filled with the chronicles of the strange doings of the Potters, Kenricks, Gentlemans, and dozens more, and who tried every art to secure his assistance, or patronage, and when that was tired out, betook themselves to a whole round of meaner agencies. It is inconceivable the amount of trouble and worry, though, with some, of pleasure and happiness, his contact with such varied natures gave him. Therefore it is, that Garrick's life, apart from the consideration of his own dramatic talent, seems to have such an interest, as a special picture of human life—a picture of which it may be said, that no such colours, such shades and effects of human character, are to be found anywhere else. His office as a manager of a great theatre, his own fine character, and lastly, his habit of preserving every paper and letter, are the special advantages which have helped us to this view.

CHAPTER. VI.

A MODEL FARCE—SHERIDAN RIVALRY—COLMAN.

1759—1761.

RETURNING to town, as it were, with Mr. Garrick from Hampton, we resume our view of the great theatre he ruled; and, with the new season of 1759, find Macklin, in his old part of *Shylock*, Moody, and Miss Pope, promoted from playing with children, strengthening the company, and making up for the loss of Woodward and of Mossop, who had joined that deserter at Dublin. Home's dull "Siege of Aquileia," "The Desert Island," and a Pantomime from the Old Goodman's Fields Theatre, called "Harlequin's Invasion," with two good farces, were the chief attractions of the season. One of the farces was Macklin's capital "Love à la Mode," spirited and humorous.* The other piece was even of greater merit.

The leaden theatrical sky was at last to be broken by a flash of true humour. One of the gayest,

* When the usual quarrel came the following year, the manager made proposals to young Wilkinson to take Macklin's place in this farce; and the young fellow, greedy for higher terms, was busy circulating how Mr. Garrick and his brother George had attempted to steal Mr. Macklin's farce, and play it at their house, against the author himself. This trick and its failure has been dwelt on, in nearly every memoir of Macklin: "Garrick's spleen outwent his policy," &c. Luckily the manager, knowing the people he had to deal with, put by every scrap he received, or a copy of whatever he wrote. And among his papers we find a note, which shows the managers believed that Macklin had sold them this very farce, and they had taken a legal opinion on the transaction, which was entirely in their favour.

pleasantest, and most laughter-moving little comedies —for it took higher rank than farce—was now put on the stage. "High Life below Stairs" had the true elements of comedy. It was a picture of human nature, and of human character besides, and its situations were infinitely droll. Over a hundred years old, it can be played to-morrow, without altering a line, and be as fresh and intelligible, as on the nights when King and Palmer, Mrs. Abington and Mrs. Clive, were convulsing Old Drury Lane as *My Lord Duke*, *Sir Harry*, *Lady Bab*, and *Lady Charlotte*. A hundred years old! The stuff called farce which amuses now, and is helped through by grotesque dress, and more grotesque contortions of face, and a few catch words, —where will *that* be at the end of a hundred years? This excellent piece has always been attributed to the Rev. Mr. Townley, and is still played under his name: but this was only the *finesse*, or timorousness, of Garrick; who was afraid, perhaps, of exciting the enmity of the servants, against whom his satire was directed. It is time that this should be set right, and the honour of being so witty and humorous a dramatist, restored to Garrick. It shows also that his correct principles of acting followed him into another direction, and helped him to write on the same pure and correct principles as those on which he acted.*

* Of Garrick's authorship of this piece there can be no doubt. Townley did nothing so respectable. Murphy knew it was Garrick's, and Warburton, an excellent judge, seems to have received a hint from Garrick himself, who had sent him two copies. "I read it with extreme pleasure and satisfaction," he writes. "I will not venture to tell you whose I think it is, because the author would be unknown. Yet I believe I am no stranger to the hand. I saw it in the very title and motto, and quite through, to the very last of the concluding page." Any one, too, reading the "Clandestine Marriage, would see that both are in the same key. Murphy, indeed, used to charge Garrick openly with having *stolen* this piece from him, and maliciously said that the manager's fears had put forward Townley as the author.

A third farce of this season was by that strange lady, Mrs. Clive, and entitled, "Every Woman in Her Humour," but it was a failure.*

When Drury Lane opened its doors for the next season, 1760-61, Garrick's good fortune, and good sense, was to furnish him with a new attraction. Indeed, by a happy chance, the very humours of the players unconsciously helped him, and their very desertion only found places for newer actors. Those humours were presently to receive a most wholesome chastisement, which they little dreamed was impending over their heads.

Sheridan, distracted with his Irish troubles, now began to think of showing his talents in town. He had intended coming to London to teach elocution, when it occurred to him he might make some additional profit by a little "star acting," at one of the great theatres. Between him and the manager of Drury Lane there had been a coldness, now of a very long date; and yet to the manager of Drury Lane he made his first overtures. Adversity had softened him, and his proposals were of the most modest and even diffident sort. Anything that suited the theatre would suit him. If he was wanted but now and again, that would fall in very well with his plans; if his services

* The scene behind the curtain was infinitely diverting—the angry actress, of course, setting all down to a secret plot of Garrick's. She was seen seeking him, high and low, with fury in her eyes—"her darling prey—and no sooner espied him, than *she fastened.*" The manager, "whose curiosity," says Wilkinson, "had led him back, to take a peep at the field of battle, after beholding her farce and its overthrow, had exultingly sat smiling at the tumult, which *gratified his spleen,*" behaved with great temper, and soothed her into good-humour. Yet, not three months before, he had been unwearied in his kindness to this fellow, teaching him *Tamerlane,* and, what was thought a great condescension, coming into the dressing-room to "make-up" his face properly.

became more necessary to the house, he would still be accommodating. He had some new pieces, played with signal success at Dublin, either, or both of which, he would get ready in a short time, and with as little trouble to the managers as possible. "He neither expected, nor desired, that any part of the general views of the theatre should give way to *his* views." The reader will bear all this in mind, at the inevitable revolt, which will break out later. As for remuneration, he would be quite content to have that guided by the success of his efforts, and would gladly receive a small share of the profits. The whole tone of this, is exceedingly humble for a "Protagonist" of distinction: and its terms are dwelt on here, to show how little excuse he later had, for setting up to be aggrieved, or for taking a high tone with the manager.

His terms were at once accepted. Garrick dealt with him handsomely, giving him a fourth of the profits, which, in a large theatre like Drury Lane, was a fair allowance. His "round" of parts was quite the same as that of Garrick, who knew well his colleague's power and gifts; and it does seem a liberal act, in the little kingdom of the stage, where only one can sit on the throne, to give a rival so fair a chance.

It was soon rumoured at the coffee-houses, that Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Garrick were to join their powers in the great play of "King John." There was much speculation, as to how they were to cast the two fine characters of the piece—*King John*, and the bastard *Faulconbridge*. Neither part would seem exactly suited to Garrick; the *King* was scarcely animated enough for him, and his figure wanted the manly boldness and gallant "dash," which the *Bastard*

required. It was obvious that Sheridan's weighty declamatory style would be more in keeping with the *King;* while of the two parts, Garrick would be most at home in the *Bastard.* Yet Davies, the friend whose portrait hung over the sideboard at Hampton, gives a most uncandid account of the transaction, by the aid of insinuation. "Garrick," he says, "when the parts were being cast, *chose* the *King;* and he actually consented that the *Bastard* should be Mr. Sheridan's. *Secretly he was determined to the contrary:*" and, after making some apology, he tried to effect an exchange of parts, to which the other was extremely averse. In this there is an inconsistency which Davies did not see; for why should Garrick voluntarily choose what he was secretly determined not to keep? It is evident that "secretly he was determined to the contrary," is a mere insinuation of the writer's, for there was no need of any "secrecy," nor for laying any plot of the kind; for Garrick was ruler, could choose for himself, and Sheridan's letter showed the place he was to occupy. Even according to Davies, Garrick carried his point "by repeated solicitations;" which was a very legitimate mode in one who had such power. But the whole is only a specimen of the little hints and touches with which those who had once been Garrick's ardent friends, and who had ceased to be so, because he was not sufficiently obsequious to their unreasonable desires, revenged themselves, by damaging his good name. The truth was, *Faulconbridge* was Garrick's character, and the one he had played only a few seasons before, with success. It was in this part that the town expected to see him. Sheridan, too, had played

the *King* in Dublin with great effect. Both, therefore, were in their natural position. To be dealing logically with insinuations and "stories," is simply absurd, and mere fighting with shadows. Mrs. Yates was the *Constance* of this revival, a great change from that charming mistress of true pathos, Cibber, in the older days, whose scream of agony as she flew off the stage—

"O Lord! my boy!"

was still recollected. Such a pair were matchless; and their characters, full of deep passion and tenderness, suited them exactly. Her throwing herself on the ground, as she said,—

"Here I and sorrow sit,
Here is my throne, let kings come bow to it!"

both in attitude, grace, and helpless prostration and agony, was one of the most piteous spectacles that could be conceived, and could not be equalled by Yates.*

"King John," so fine a play in itself, in the hands of two such actors as Sheridan and Garrick, began at once to draw the town. The house was crowded every night. The King "commanded" a performance two nights before Christmas, and an officious friend about the Court—possibly the same who was to come later with news of the King's delight at the *Lord Mayor* in "Richard," took care to bring the manager word, that the King was enchanted with Sheridan. The "friend" still passing over Garrick himself, was then asked if the King had not been satisfied with the performance of the

* Murphy excels himself, in his description of Mrs. Cibber's playing in this revival. He says, "her voice, *though* often felt on former occasions, was never expanded to such a degree. It *was harmony in an uproar.*" Yet she did not play at all on the occasion!

Bastard. And it must be borne in mind that praise is part of the fair professional earnings of an actor, in the seeking of which there need be no delicacy. The friend was again glad to tell him, that the King thought his "rendering" too much overdone—exaggerated and unnatural. The biographers of Garrick delight in relating how at this criticism Garrick was so torn with envy, jealousy, and disappointment, that although all places were taken for several performances, the play was at once withdrawn, and not acted again; that Sheridan's friends were furious; and that he himself broke out into open revolt, while meetings and discussions took place to arrange matters, but nothing could be agreed on. The whole, adds Davies, ended in the retirement of one of the combatants, and they could never be brought to appear together on the stage again.

Vanity—that is, a sensitiveness as to his professional gifts, was certainly one of Garrick's weaknesses—a weakness, however, as has been often shown in these pages, which rarely tempted him into anything that was unjust towards others. Assuming all that has been related to be true, it must have been a mind raised far above the little meannesses, and earthy feelings of life, which could have been wholly indifferent to the "glorification" of another's gifts, at the expense of its own. Therefore, taking the whole story as bearing most against Garrick, it must be remembered, that with a great actor, a diminution of prestige or reputation is fatal—and to be expecting a manager and actor to go on exhibiting himself at a disadvantage, would be Quixotic and ridiculous. But the whole was no more than a vulgar green-room scandal. The

play was played three times. Sheridan—so far from refusing to play on the same stage—so far from there being any meetings of friends to arrange the quarrel—acted on to the end of the season; played his great part of the *Earl of Essex*, which had a run; declaimed *Macbeth*, and *Hamlet*, and *Othello;* and before the season closed, the rivals appeared together again harmoniously in "King John"! But, as I said, it is idle arguing against rumours and whispers. Garrick's whole behaviour refutes these insinuations. Previously to "King John" he had forwarded every scheme that Sheridan proposed to bring out his own powers. He had expressed himself again and again delighted at the great houses Sheridan was bringing. He allowed him to act his own characters. On alternate nights they played *Hamlet*, and even Garrick's own *cheval de bataille, Richard.* He said openly, that except in *Barry*, he had never found so able or so useful an assistant. On other nights he allowed him the stage to himself, an all but monopoly. In "The Fair Penitent," and other pieces, they played together.

If he was all this time torn with a secret envy, he certainly deserves credit for his successful mastery of that passion. So far as his behaviour to a rival went, "*he seemed*," admits Davies, "*for a time* to suspend his jealousy, *and promote every scheme proposed by Sheridan for their mutual profit.*" He did indeed: and, later in 1763, when Mrs. Frances Sheridan's lively comedy of "The Discovery," was put into his hands, this envious man accepted it, brought it out, allowed Sheridan to take the leading part, "created" a part in it himself, and settled the profits on quite exceptional terms; for, besides two

nights' profits for the author, he allowed Sheridan two more for his services. Taking the worst view that he had stopped the run of a single play, which was damaging his reputation—he at least made a handsome *amende*.

The *Earl of Essex*, though one of Barry's tender characters, still only made one of the dreary, declamatory series. The subject seemed to have such attractions, that half-a-dozen playwrights, and half-a-dozen leading actors, tried their skill upon it. It was a cold and turgid performance, on the favourite classical model.* Sheridan had the most exalted opinion of its merits, and went about quoting "fine" passages. It was a line from this play quoted by him, that excited Johnson's ridicule—

"Who rules o'er freemen should himself be free."

The great despot said scornfully this was about as good logic as,

"Who drives fat oxen should himself be fat."

A humorous and happy parody, but scarcely a refutation.† Other attractions were Foote and his "Minor" brought from another theatre, and which, but for Garrick's friendship with the Lord Chamberlain, would have been interdicted by ecclesiastical censorship.

But Garrick merely seasoned his bill of fare with these "sensation" pageants; all the while he was giving a series of good plays, Murphy's capital

* Murphy says the diction is "often sublime."

† Had this little bit of facetiousness been delivered by another, in the doctor's presence, no one would have so readily demolished it—perhaps after this fashion—"Why, sir, what a fallacy is here. There is no similitude between driving oxen and ruling freemen. The latter is a moral relation; the former physical. But, sir," would, perhaps, have added the doctor, shaking and rolling himself in his chair, "take the fellow on his own ground, may we not assume there is a certain harmony and fitness in fat oxen being driven by a fat driver?"

comedies, and the pleasant comedietta, "Polly Honeycombe," a free and airy picture of life.* Colman's was the lively and spirited "Polly Honeycombe," a capital satire on the sentimental taste of the day, and a sort of anticipation of the character of *Lydia Languish*. That clever writer, thoughtful, searching, bright, had a mind something like Garrick's own, for he combined wit and good sense in matters of the world, though he showed a quick and sensitive temper, which Garrick did not. They were now great friends, and the origin of their intimacy was a little curious.

One of the features of the day was the extravagant value of literary support. "Hack writers" found their account in this feeling. Danger arose from the licence and personality, tolerated in books and newspapers, where personal defects of mind, and body, and family history, were what is called "fair game," and could be dealt with in the grossest fashion, and without check. The contemptible character of the assailant was his security. Any personage of consideration was therefore helpless, and at the mercy of these adventurers, unless he met them with the same weapons; and this seems to account for the crowd of "scribblers," who found work, and profit, and subsistence on both sides. Many were of mean ability, but the open field for personality carried off all defects in execution.†

* Cross, the prompter, said that "The Jealous Wife" had been received with more approbation than any comedy since "The Suspicious Husband."

† The accumulation of attacks on Garrick would themselves fill many shelves in a library. No man ever was so harassed by the pamphleteer, or perhaps turned by them to such profit. A little weakness, and perhaps good nature, exposed him to all the inconveniences of their protection, and involved him in the discussions and recriminations which filled a great portion of his life. Whatever service these Dalgettys of the pen might have done him, they were sure to claim an exaggerated reward.

In this way young Colman, about twenty-six years of age, and straggling from the rough road that led to the law, published an anonymous "Letter of Abuse to David Garrick, Esq.," in which he adroitly affected to take the part of the wronged heroes of the stage—of the Macklins, Cibbers, and others, whom the dazzling abilities of Garrick had so completely extinguished. Paul Hiffernan, one of Garrick's plagues, was brought in as *Doctor Liffey*,—and the whole turned to an ingenious shape of flattery. The author was, of course, made known to the manager, in due expectance of patronage, and a kind and grateful letter of Garrick's might naturally lead the writer to believe that the manager felt himself under a heavy obligation. "I am extremely obliged," the letter ran, "for your particular and genteel compliment to me. If you would still add to the favour conferred on me, I should wish to have the pleasure of seeing you in Southampton-street, or rather, I will do myself the pleasure of waiting on you, when I return from the country, if you will signify to me by a line that it will not be inconvenient, or disagreeable to you." Then came a very admirable profession in the letter, which illustrates excellently the surprising rule of life he had laid out for himself, and followed with a strictness, and severe self-sacrifice. "I must assure you," he wrote, "that I have more pleasure than uneasiness, when I read a true, well-intended criticism, though against myself; *for I always flatter myself that I can attain the mark which my friends may point out to me*, and I really think myself neither too old nor too wise, to learn." This, addressed to a young man, then obscure and without influence, was surprisingly modest

and a genuine admission of what the writer felt. To the end of his life, he almost eagerly welcomed hints and criticisms, weighed them carefully, dismissed them if worthless, and adopted them, if at all serviceable to his playing. Very often, impatience at friendly fault-finding, arises, not so much from wounded vanity, as from mortification, at finding so much time and trouble thrown away. Garrick, with as quick and sensitive a pulse for praise or blame, as mortal ever brought into the world, had levelled it, as well as his resentments, into perfect subservience to the grand object of the interests of his theatre, and his professional reputation.

This may be seen from the innumerable anonymous criticisms which reached him, and which he could adopt and reply to. A reason, too, for Garrick's courtesy, might have been the significant mention of Colman in the "Rosciad." Even two lines from Churchill was high praise:—

> For Colman many; but the peevish tongue
> Of prudent age found out that he was young.

This could scarcely be called impartial testimony, for they were well known to be allies.

Thus was laid the foundation of a sincere friendship —on Garrick's side, at least. It must be said Colman worked hard for his patron, and supplied the press with puffs in every shape. At times he became "aggrieved," and troubled his friend a good deal. Colman's was a congenial mind—vivacious, eager, and full of a quick talent. It made no difference with the placid Garrick, that Colman should have warmly ranged himself on Murphy's side in the "Orphan of China" quarrel —it was rather a fresh ground for mistrust of his own

judgment, and for re-considering the matter. There was no abating the warmth of his friendly interest; and when the curtain was about to rise on Colman's play, the delight in which he wrote off a hurried note about the full house and the crammed boxes, is truly genuine and characteristic.* To Colman, to the very last, he was the same warm, generous friend, prompt with a hundred little offices; while Colman was but too often captious, fractious, and ready to become an enemy on some trivial grievance, or on some more unworthy pecuniary misunderstanding. Even the play which has made Colman's reputation with posterity—"The Jealous Wife"—owes its success to Garrick's judgment, who, with nice tact, discarded two whole acts of broad, coarse humour, which by themselves made a good farce. This kindness was to have its own reward; for, in Colman's "set" was a strange parson of immense intellectual power and ability, and who was busy with a poetical review, that would presently confound the green-rooms, and set Roscius on the very highest pinnacle of his whole life.

* "I have this moment taken a peep at the house. The pit and galleries are crammed—the boxes full to the last row. I am most happy about it, and could not help communicating it to one I so love and esteem."

END OF VOL. I.

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